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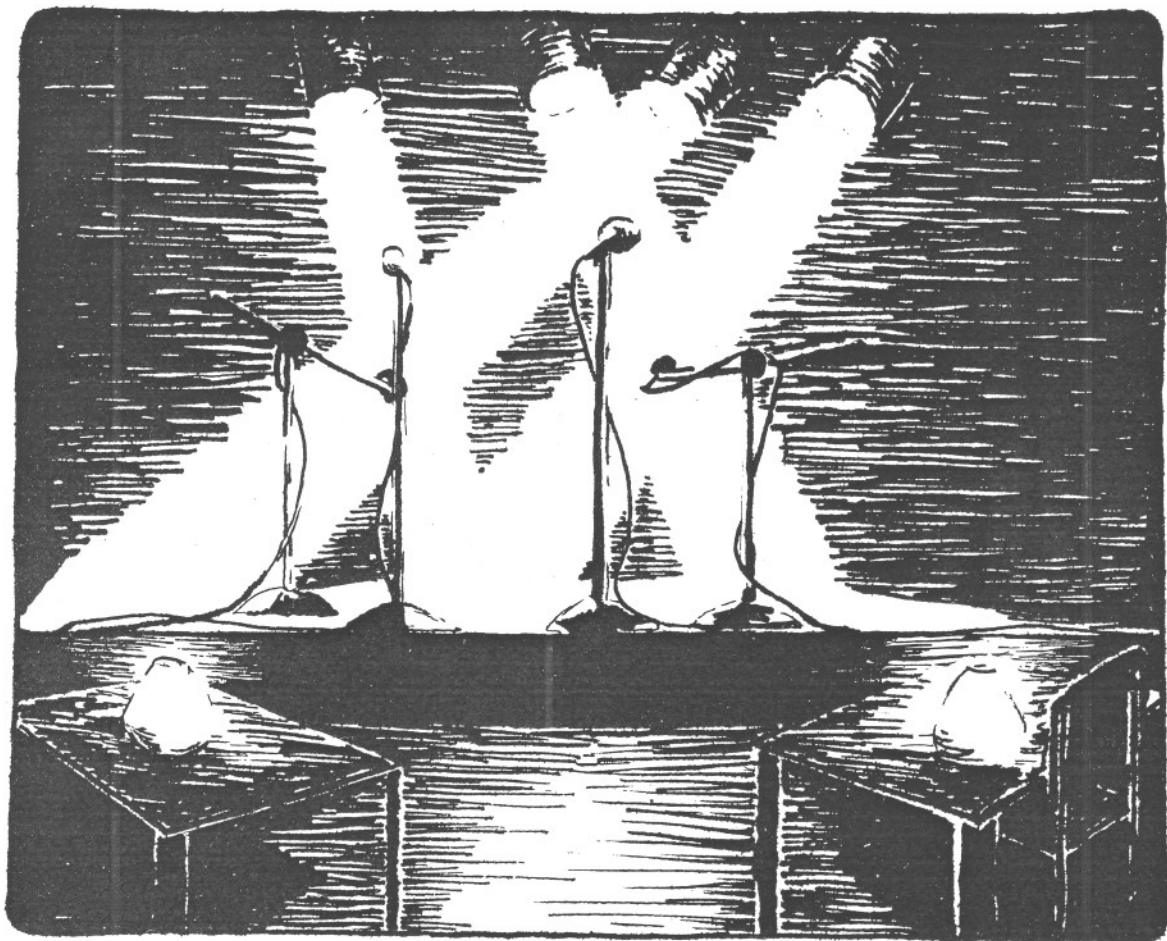
BULLETIN

DE MUSIQUE FOLKLORIQUE
CANADIENNE

Volume 20, no. 1

Special Issue: Folk Clubs

March/mars 1986





CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE MUSIQUE FOLKLORIQUE

The *Canadian Folk Music Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Canadian Folk Music Society and contains articles, notices, reviews and commentary on all aspects of Canadian folk music.
(CN ISN 0068-8746)

The *Canadian Folk Music Society* exists to encourage the study, appreciation and enjoyment of the folk music of Canada in all its aspects. It also strives to promote publication and performance of this music and to stimulate national and international understanding through a common interest in folk music. Memberships, which run with the calendar year, are available by writing:

Canadian Folk Music Society
Box 4232, Station C,
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
T2T 5N1

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La *Société canadienne de musique folklorique* existe pour encourager l'étude, l'appréciation et la jouissance de la musique folklorique au Canada sous tous ses aspects. Elle tend également à promouvoir la publication et l'exécution de cette musique et à stimuler une entente nationale et internationale en raison d'un intérêt commun pour la musique de folklore. L'abonnement, valable annuellement du 1er janvier au 31 décembre, s'obtient en écrivant à:

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With The Voices Of Canadian Folk Music



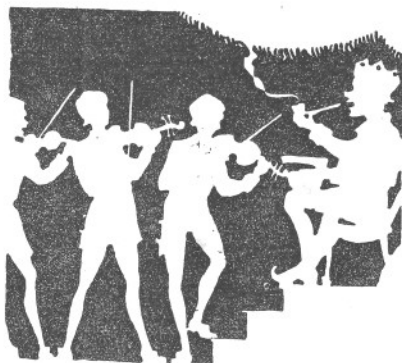
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Quotes

The public school with English bless,
The public school forever,
God save our country and ever bless,
The public school forever.

Parody to "Maple Leaf Forever"

-Sask. Trustees Assoc. during the Separate school controversy, 1921.

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INTRODUCTION

by John Leeder: Guest Editor.

Here it is at last: the Folk Club Issue has been bubbling around in our heads for some years, and at last it's come to reality.

Folk music in its native state is of course music of ordinary people's homes and workplaces, of people's unguarded moments and innermost thoughts. Putting folk music "on stage" in a concert, a coffeehouse or a folk club, or even in the more or less formalized situation of a singers' circle, is in a sense a contradiction in terms. One of the most important measures of a folk music event's success is how well it manages to "put the living room on the stage" -- how well the music manages to break through the proscenium arch and create in the audience the feeling of what it must have been like to hear the music as it was meant to be heard. If this process succeeds, it's partly to be credited to the performer -- but it's also partly to be credited to the surroundings themselves, and how well the event is organized so as not to "get in the way" of the expression of the music.

In this issue we get to see how different organizations from one end of the country to the other have dealt with the problems of presenting folk music in the healthiest of possible surroundings for its expression. We have a robust sampling of thoughts from organizers of house concerts, singers' circles, folk clubs, coffeehouses, and organizations less easy to pigeonhole. Those of us who are already involved in clubs can learn from each other, sample each other's points of view. Those of us who are thinking of starting up folk music associations have the benefit of advice from some of the most successful outfits in Canada and insights into "what went wrong" from some who are no longer around. And those of us who attend performances and

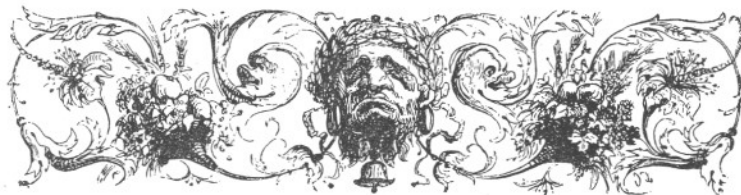
listen to the music can gain new understanding of what goes on behind the scenes in order to bring the music to the people.

Not that this issue is totally representative of the Canadian folk club mosaic. The organizations who couldn't see their way clear to writing something for us, or who had good intentions but just couldn't manage the deadline, would have produced ample material for at least one more full issue . . . perhaps we'll have a Folk Club Issue Mark II another year -- perhaps generated totally by reactions to opinions expressed in this issue!

All the authors herein deserve our thanks, and it's perhaps unfair to single out one -- but not all best-selling writers would be prepared to donate the skills with which they make their living in the cause of a volunteer association like ours. I urge BULLETIN readers to express our appreciation to Sid Marty by rushing out and buying a copy of "Men for the Mountains"!

Lastly, I wish to express my regrets to our French-speaking readers over the lack of French-language articles in this issue. This can be attributed partly to my own shortage of personal contacts in the folk music scene in French Canada, partly to the lack of response from the associations I did reach, but mostly to the fact that Quebec is not "une province comme les autres", and the sorts of institutions which we in English-speaking Canada call "folk clubs" are not a prevalent feature of Quebec's folk music landscape. Perhaps some bold souls will see fit to change that . . .

Be that as it may. The Folk Club Issue is at last a reality -- and I hope the ideas and suggestions it presents will encourage the organization of folk clubs and the creation of new places where folk music can be brought to folk music lovers in its most vibrant form -- live performance.



HOUSE CONCERTS

by Barry and Lyn Luft

"When's the next one?" This is what most of the guests ask after one of the basement concerts is over. These performances in our home are quite unique and came into being to provide local and some out-of-town folk musicians with a place to play in the company of a listening and appreciative audience. Naturally, they are good social and musical times combined, and we believe more house concerts should be happening. Maybe this article will encourage others to organize them. We hope so.

Here is how we do it!

First of all a date is established, usually on a Saturday night; then we contact and secure the musicians. There are three different sets of music in our format and therefore three different "acts".

Since space is limited and the total admission is relatively small (\$4.00 usually), one really can't promise to pay the musicians very much. We usually find though that most performers (amateurs or professionals) do not mind this aspect, and will accept whatever money is available. But, if you really want to pay a musician bigger bucks, have only one performer and charge a higher admission. Another possibility is to have a house concert that is free, with performers donating their time and guests bringing goodies and snacks. Or, hold a benefit and have the money go to a specific cause.

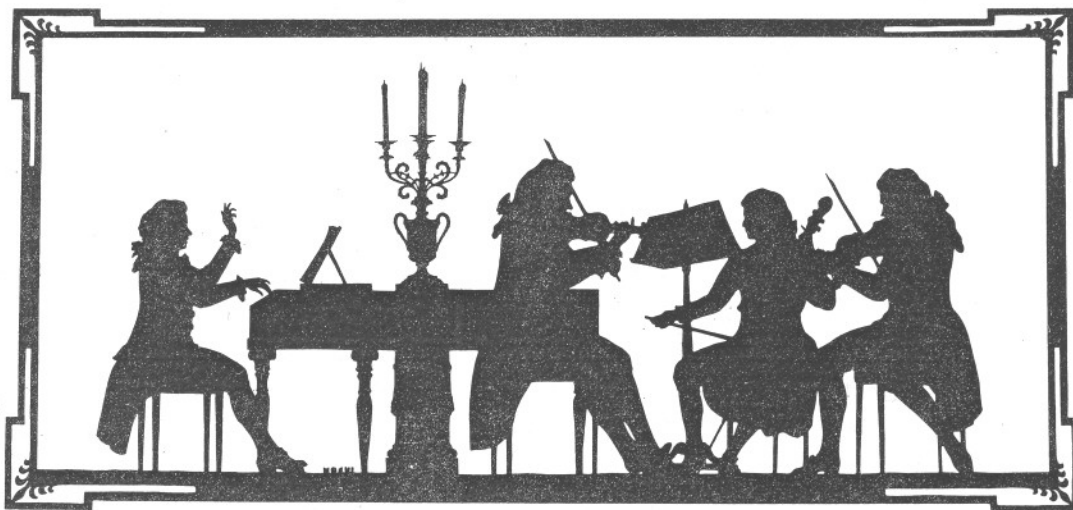
The next step in our organizing is to send out a flyer-invitation about two weeks before the concert. We mail this invitation to our friends and acquaintances who are on a mailing list we have built up over the years. We prefer not to advertise to the general public because we want familiar folks (who bring a few new faces) rather than a house full of strangers.

On the invitation we state who is playing, date, time, address and phone number. We also announce the admission, and ask people to RSVP by phone if they can come. We request that folks bring their own cold drinks (beer, wine, pop, etc.), and a cushion or lawn chair. We usually supply coffee, juice and goodies.

Since we have a fairly large open basement area, we have been able to hold about 75 to 80 people. This number is by no means a suggested standard, and we encourage others to have house performances with fewer or more in attendance as home space will allow.

From the time the invitations are sent out to the day of the concert, the RSVP calls are answered and a list is kept of those who are coming. We cut off at 75, disappointing a few people, and establishing a waiting list in case of cancellations.

The food preparations rest on Lyn and she spends quite a few hours baking and organizing the goodies and snacks, etc.



The day of the concert keeps us both busy preparing the concert area and the goodies location. Some of the details include getting the stage area ready, lighting, arranging available chairs in the audience area, obtaining a large tub for ice and cold drinks, putting up no-smoking signs (smokers can smoke upstairs or outside). Other details include getting money and setting up an admission box, ash trays, extension cords, garbage containers, bottle openers, filling coffee urns, and setting out the goodies and snacks.

Friends begin to arrive at 7:00 p.m. and usually can't resist a cup of Lyn's hot spiced apple cider. The musicians are busy tuning and practising in various bedrooms, and more guests keep arriving. At 7:45 Barry leads a few sing-a-longs and at 8:00 the first performer or group is introduced. The house concert is under way!

After each of the first two sets of music there is a half-hour break for refreshments and socializing. Around 11:15, at the end of the last set, we both wind up the evening by leading a few rousing chorus songs or sea chanteys. "Thank you"s and farewells are exchanged before guests wend their way to their cars, humming a tune or two from the evening's musical offerings.

The performers get paid their cut from the admission after some money is taken out to cover expenses (postage, goodies, coffee, juice, etc.). Then the clean-up begins. Usually some folks leave a lawn chair or two which are never claimed. These articles can be used for seating at the next house concert or sold at the annual garage sale.

We have tended not to encourage people to bring children to these events because of the potential disruptions when little ones get restless, but we have also hosted and attended family-type house concerts with appropriate entertainers for children. Either type is possible.

Performers love these evenings as much as the audience even though the pay is low, and they appreciate the chance to share their music or hone their skills in front of a warm, attentive group.

On the whole, house concerts add up to a magnificent evening of fun, but they require some energy, dedication and a little organizational skill. Certainly our model of the house concert is not the only one possible and readers are encouraged to vary their own attempts to suit their particular interests, style and physical space.

So why don't you host a house concert? But... be prepared to have a ready answer when your guests ask "When's the next one?"

THE NEW TROJAN HORSE CAFE

by Howard Kaplan and Ellie Kirzner

The Trojan Horse Cafe was established in 1983 to present a broad spectrum of political culture in Toronto. Seating about 70 people comfortably, the Trojan Horse is the size of the traditional coffee house, and provides a venue for folk music, poetry, and those forms of theatre and dance suited to informal staging. The club is managed on a non-profit basis by a group of volunteers.

The original Trojan Horse Cafe was a home for political activists and musicians from Toronto's Greek and Chilean communities from the early 1970's to the early 1980's. Then, as some of the Greek community returned from their Canadian exile and as the Latin American focus shifted to Central America, the popularity of the cafe was declining. Meanwhile, in 1981 and 1982, groups of Toronto musicians interested in social change had met twice on Grindstone Island and were forming the Music and Social Change Network. Because of this network, there was already a functioning community of political musicians working together when the Trojan Horse space became available for a change of management. This new community operated the space as an unincorporated association for about a year before reorganizing as a non-profit corporation. Whenever government grants are available for the purpose, it employs one or more members to serve as co-ordinator, property manager, or whatever other role can usefully be filled by paid staff, but the bulk of the work is always done by unpaid volunteers. Some of the volunteers take the opportunity to become involved on the various key committees, such as the Artistic Committee, which chooses the acts to be presented, while others prefer a lower level of involvement and distribute flyers, work in the kitchen, or collect money at the door.

The facilities of the cafe are basically those of a coffeehouse rather than a restaurant or bar. The premises consist of the ground floor and basement of a rented storefront outside of Toronto's main entertainment districts. A mixture of benches and folding chairs seats about 70 people around low tables, but when an unusually large crowd is anticipated the seating can be rearranged to hold more. A separate artists' warmup area and retreat has been set aside in the basement. There is a permanent sound system sufficient for most acoustic performers. A small kitchen is available for storing and serving pastries, light meals, and hot and cold beverages, but not for any serious food preparation or cooking. Beer and wine are available

only when an outside group with charitable tax status obtains a liquor permit and co-sponsors a concert. Because of the acoustic orientation and the lack of emphasis on alcohol, both performers and audiences find that the space encourages attention to the artists rather than distracting conversations and noise.

The cafe tries to use its space three nights per week, leaving the days and other evenings open for community rentals. On Wednesday nights there is a free open stage called "Just Horsing Around", where budding artists can feel comfortable about including political material in their developing repertoires or can simply jam with other musicians to develop their skills. The major concert nights are Friday and Saturday evenings, when a typical show would run from 8:30 to 11:30. Roughly half of the performers could be classed as "folk", broadly defined, including traditional British and English Canadian style performers such as Ian Robb or Muddy York, more contemporary ones such as Marie-Lynn Hammond or Ken Whitely, explicitly political musicians such as Nancy White, and minority culture performers such as the Chilean ensemble Grupo Taller. Other performers include poets, drama groups, rock bands, comics, mimes, storytellers, and basically whoever is politically active and can work comfortably in a coffeehouse setting. The usual admission fee is \$4.00, of which half goes to the artists and half to the cafe. All proceeds from the kitchen also go to the cafe.

Rentals of the space by outside groups form an important part of the Trojan Horse's operations. Because the cafe includes kitchen and sound facilities, it is an attractive space for groups who wish to present cultural events without making a large capital investment. The use of the space by these communities also has clear financial benefits for the Trojan Horse -- not only do the rental fees help pay the cafe's own rent, but the service provided by the cafe to those community groups helps to attract some outside grant funding. The most regular outside rental is Native Expressions, which has been a part of the schedule since 1983; every Tuesday night, the Native community can meet to hear its own poets and musicians. Other communities who have made frequent use of the space include the Salvadorean, Black, and Lesbian communities.

The combination of ingredients in the Trojan Horse makes it feel different from any other club in Toronto, but there is no single factor that accounts for this different feel. While there are some artists who perform only at the Trojan Horse, many will also appear at the other folk

clubs, bars, or theatres in Toronto. One must look at a typical month rather than at a typical evening to understand what is unique about the Trojan Horse. There is nowhere else in Toronto where a single, small organization is working to serve such a diversity of artists who support, and who are themselves often active workers in, the various movements for positive social change. The different artists do not appeal to similar tastes, as would the series of artists at a folk club or a country-and-western bar; instead, they meet similar needs -- the needs of different constituencies to see cultural activities used for the furthering of community or political goals.

Seen from one perspective, diversity is a source of strength; seen from another, that diversity is fragmentation of the audience, a source of continuing difficulty. There is no Trojan Horse "crowd" who will drop in to hear whoever is playing; instead, there are a number of largely separate audiences who will attend only when artists of special interest to them are performing. As these potential audiences are spread throughout Toronto, where any kind of city-wide advertising is prohibitively expensive, it has been an ongoing challenge to find effective strategies for directing publicity to the people likely to respond to it. It helps that many of the artists can publicize their performances within their own communities. Unfortunately, building bridges between these communities -- peace activists, Latin American exiles, Natives, folk music enthusiasts, and so on -- is always difficult, and the Trojan Horse has had only limited success in bringing them together as audiences. With the fragmented audience having so many competing choices for an evening's entertainment, the Horse operates below its capacity, and it is a continuing struggle to meet month-to-month expenses.

In summary, The New Trojan Horse Cafe is seeking to provide both communities and audiences with a space in which they can pursue the use of the arts to advance political and community goals. It has had some success in this venture, but at this date is surviving rather than thriving.

The New Trojan Horse Cafe, 179A Danforth Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M4K 1N2, 416 461-8367.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since this article was received, word has reached us that the New Trojan Horse has changed direction somewhat and has opted to give up its permanent premises, but plans to continue to pursue its objectives in other ways and in other venues.

MARIPOSA IN THE HOUSE

by Howard Kaplan

In an earlier year or a smaller community there might be nothing remarkable about Mariposa in the House, but in Toronto in 1985 it is noteworthy that a group of 15 to 20 adults would meet twice a month just to sing with each other.

In addition to organizing its well-known summer festival, the Mariposa Folk Foundation organizes a number of other events through the year. One of these events is Mariposa in the Woods, an annual folk camp where the participants play, sing, and dance under the guidance of professional folk artists. After the 1984 Woods, a number of the participants felt that they would like to continue meeting through the year to do the kind of group singing they had done at the Woods; these people became the nucleus of Mariposa in the House. The majority of the current participants are people who have attended the Woods, but others are encouraged to join the group. The meeting dates are consistent--the first and third Friday of the month, September through June--and the location rotates among the participants' homes. The Mariposa office answers enquiries about where the next meeting will be, but otherwise the minimal organization involved is done entirely by the participants.

Basically, the evenings consist of three or four hours of group singing. The songs come from a variety of sources. Some were originally taught by staff at the Woods or similar events, but most are introduced by the participants themselves. When written lyrics or lead sheets are available, photocopies are distributed, and people are asked to keep their files of these copies organized for future meetings. There is a small kitty available to pay for any unusual photocopying expenses, but most participants have access to inexpensive photocopying or simply pay for copies themselves on the grounds that the costs are quite small and tend to balance out among members by the end of the year. When the printed source includes harmony parts, those who can read music may try to teach them, but there is no single or rotating "teacher" responsible for directing the group. The emphasis is entirely on the joy of singing rather than on theory or technique.

Several factors contribute to the success of Mariposa in the House. While not everyone comes every time, the core group is stable enough to maintain a good collective memory for the material. The songs are, for the most part,

easy to learn, so that people who have just had a full week at work can spend their Friday nights relaxing. The central clearinghouse for information at the Mariposa office relieves the participants from having to phone each other to announce meeting dates and locations, and it encourages new people to feel that it is an open rather than a closed event. In summary, a minimal amount of organization has led to an event that, despite the variety of competing events in Toronto, keeps attracting people to participate in a very old form of self-entertainment.



In July of 1959 six friends met on a Wednesday evening to sing traditional songs at the Alma YMCA, on the west side of Vancouver. Those six invited a few friends and soon the Wednesday night gatherings had a name: the Folk Song Circle. From 1959 to the present the Folk Song Circle has met on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. It has remained the core of the Vancouver Folk Society, through all its times of expansion and reduction.

Al Cox, Phil Thomas, and Hilda Thomas were there on the first night and are still around today. That continuity says a lot about the VFSS, and especially about its Folk Song Circle. Vancouver experienced the era of revivalist coffee houses (circle members performed frequently at the Bunkhouse and the Inquisition), the era of singer-songwriters, of bluegrass and old-timey music, of each "folk" wave. The Song Circle was affected only briefly and slightly by each. It has been resistant to change, as though some unstated law prescribed its traditional flavour. In any case, those who love or hate the Folk Song Circle would probably have quite similar lists of its main characteristics. Many people have described it as "serious". The audience is quiet and attentive; the singers know they are being listened to. The Song Circle, although it no longer is a circle per se, implicitly demands participation. Few people feel truly comfortable attending repeatedly without singing. Most songs in an evening are in a traditional vein; many have choruses; many are Canadian. Most performances are unadorned, the song's words being paramount. One gets a sense quickly that this is a singing club that likes singing songs of traditional and social purpose. As a result, some people find it too serious. Others find that it's what they've been looking for -- and they've kept it going for twenty-six years.

The Folk Song Circle has retained a similar structure over the years. Basically, we have two halves to the evening with five slots in each half. Each performer (or group) performs three songs (or tunes). We have a coffee break for about twenty minutes between halves. Some variants included an opening chanter chorus in the early 70's and a few attempts to have a dance during the break. Each evening is hosted by, usually, a board member who keeps the list and introduces each performer. Recently, though, we realized hosting is a skill deserving more attention to detail than many of us have been giving. The result was a workshop facilitated by our most experienced emcee: Al Cox. Following are the reminders that grew from

that evening's discussion. You may find them applicable to your club. The point is that we discussed a lot of quite obvious ideas, but we had never aired them before. Nor had we collected them clearly. So here they are:

1. The emcee should have responsibility only for greeting people and arranging the programme. (Other duties, such as making coffee, arranging chairs, and adjusting lights, should be delegated to other people.)
2. Arrange the order of performers to give variety to the programme.
3. Plan for a first performer and perhaps invite some people specially.
4. Some opening chanteys, or a tune break part way through the evening, would help assure variety.
5. Pretend that the audience is brand new; give all the information about meeting times and memberships.
6. Explain how to be part of the performer's list.
7. Explain about non-smoking policy.
8. In general, the host's job is to encourage an informal, congenial atmosphere for the evening. Introductions and follow-up remarks should be made with that in mind.

Of course all these points are quite obvious. Most important is that we came to terms with just how influential the host can be in making the evening successful. Participants in the workshop will probably all face the hosting job a bit more conscientiously from now on.

Some of the preceding reminders indicate that we aren't entirely satisfied with the old format and that we're looking for more variety. That's true; but don't be misled. We've long given up any idea that the Song Circle should be all things to all people. The weight always comes down in favour of singing in a traditional vein.

The people who worry about such things as a balance of content, educational role of the society and whether its objectives are being met, which concerts to sponsor, how to support a worthwhile benefit, and where the New Year's Eve party should be held -- the people who treat both the philosophical and practical matters of the society -- are the VFSS board.

It's the board that generates most of the activities and carries through with organizing. The Folk Song Circle is only one of the activities, but it is central. During the Society's most expansive and visible times, the mid-to-late 70's, the Circle was left to fend for itself even more than usual. The most active Society members poured their energies into publications (Canada Folk Bulletin), a Friday

night folk coffee house (The Green Cove), a radio programme (on Co-op Radio), and special concerts. Little energy remained for the Circle, and many wondered whether it would or even should survive. But as the demands of the other projects took their toll on volunteers, people turned again to the Circle while they reassessed where the Society was going and what it should be doing.

During that highly active time of CFB, Green Cove, and so on, the Society certainly was fulfilling many of its objectives: to reach new audiences with traditional folk music, to encourage an awareness of Canadian music and culture, to support folk musicians through providing a venue and a paying audience. Each project worked well in its time and stretched the Society's reach far beyond its original Circle. Who can say why those projects folded? Too few volunteers? Too little income? Too little interest? What about the changes in the lives of Society members (a relatively childless society suddenly turned prolific)? In any case, one committee after another disbanded, leaving, by 1981, the Circle as the on-going activity.

There seems to be a lesson here, before going on to what the Society does now. The VFSS has passed through several stages. Viewed as an organism, it has had growth spurts, it has been alternately weak and strong, it could have died several times. It needed time to revitalize when it was exhausted, but it always needed continuity of some kind. In the case of the VFSS, the Song Circle represents that continuity.

The first responsibility of the Board is to assure the health of the Circle, but its commitment to spreading and supporting folk music, particularly Canadian music (and B.C. songs, most of which were collected and published by Phil Thomas), that commitment urges other activities.

When a recent application to the Cultural Grants Committee of Vancouver City on behalf of VFSS was turned down (we have received grants for several years, and they have helped seed a number of concerts and other projects), we had to take a look at what we had been doing in the way of spreading folk music. What we found surprised even us. The number and breadth of activities either sponsored by VFSS or in which its members were major participants was impressive. That the Society was perceived, however, to be small, amateurish and at least in the eyes of the City officials relatively invisible was a problem we had to come to terms with. So we appealed the rejection, stating our case. A small sampling of the past year's activities included

sponsorship of monthly urban "Country Dances" where 200 people learn contra and other dances. Children are welcome and some dances are especially for them. The bus driver's union (ICTU) was helped out during its lockout by a benefit with music provided by VFSS, with several hundred people hearing songs of past and present struggles. Annually the Society is represented during Canada Studies Week by members singing Canadian folk songs in the schools. One group carried B.C. songs on tour to Newfoundland. The past fall we provided the main concert for the Musicologists Conference in Vancouver, the VFSS represented by eleven performers who carried on the spirit of participatory music by singing in the lobby at the close of the concert. The line between performer and audience was erased as everyone joined in. Annually a good size delegation goes to Seattle to perform at Folklife, a festival with 120,000 in attendance. For two years now we have co-sponsored French language concerts with Le Centre Culturel in Vancouver. We hold house concerts where about 40 people can hear and meet performers in an informal setting (Roy Bailey, Kevin Burke, and Frank Farrel most recently). Our recent move to a new location for the Folk Song Circle has also led to another concert format. At the Anza Club, where beer and a large room is available, we now can have concerts in conjunction with Song Circle nights. The second half of one Wednesday evening during recent months included the singing of Louis Killen and another Wednesday included the Grupo Moncada from Cuba. (The new addition of beer, by the way, has perhaps loosened the atmosphere, but not adversely. Since it is a new addition, we don't yet know its full impact.)

These activities only suggest a few of the ways VFSS encouraged folk music at present. The majority of women performing for the International Women's Day celebration in Vancouver this year, for instance, were from VFSS. The VFSS is known for providing performers at benefits and rallies for social progress. That reputation is bound to displease some people, but it clearly indicates the bent of VFSS to this time.

Another kind of activity, though, is extremely important to us: community gatherings. We have an annual camp at Crescent Beach, where volleyball can sometimes take precedence over a chantey workshop. Children are a major part of the weekend, as they are at our annual New Year's Eve party at Riley Park Community Centre where all ages dance, sing, eat together until 1:00 a.m. We have child care for the youngest ones and a games room for bigger kids. But they're all welcome to join in Virginia reels.

So what kind of advice grows out of all this for people wanting to start a folk club? Well, the YFSS works because it exists for good reasons. It isn't trying for mass appeal. It is a serious organization dedicated to promoting music, mostly traditional, of Canada and elsewhere. It also works toward building a sense of community, whether it be through country dances or summer camps. Everyone participates, shares the work and the pleasure. Those ideals have sustained this organization for a long time.

THE RANCLANDS FOLK CLUB

by Richard Old

The Ranchlands Folk Club began in 1982/83 when the principal of St. Rita School got a few of his musical friends together along with some parents in the school who were interested in folk music and on 3 occasions held a sing song in the school library. During the 1983/84 school year, the need for some funds to build a creative playground at the school arose, and so the group suggested a try at a folk night format.

In January of 1984 the first night was held with guests Barry and Lyn Luft and Draught Porridge. The house band was comprised of principal Richard Old, teacher, Dean Jarvey, U. of C. grad student, Mary Buckley, and Bill Visentin, a Calgary realtor who became the bass player.

The first night drew about 60 people, and the decision to continue was made and the Ranchlands Folk Club was Born. Two more clubs were held in 83/84, and the present format calls for 5 clubs a season. People who attend are mainly parents of St. Rita School, residents of the Ranchlands area of Calgary, friends of the musicians, and a few of Calgary's faithful folk followers.

The intent of the club is to provide a school community oriented club, to provide another forum for local folk musicians, and to transfer any profits from the club to St. Rita School.

The club is held in the school gym. The sound provided by Ken Persson is very good. There is lots of room to move, and smoking is restricted to the hallway outside the gym. Volunteer help is provided by the parents of St. Rita School. Our usual crowd is around 80, and we can handle 120 without being crowded.

Support from the Lufts, Don Gowan and Lisa Rackstrew, Tim Rogers, John Campbell, and Ken Persson was instrumental in making the club successful. A "Name the Houseband" contest was held, and the club is now hosted by the "Nose Hill Pickers."

THE CALGARY SKI CLUB COFFEE HOUSE

by Ken Persson

The Calgary Ski Club began running a coffee house in the mid 70's as a service both to Club members and to the general public. My involvement in the coffee house dates from around 1980, when one of the key organizers moved away and I was asked to help with bookings and sound.

Initially, the coffee house operated at the clubhouse every Sunday evening, starting at 8:00 p.m. Later on, the frequency was reduced to once every two weeks, and during the last couple of years to once a month. Since January of 1985, it has operated only occasionally. The reason for changing from every two weeks to once a month was a feeling that the former was "too often" for people to want to come and that holding a coffee house every month would increase audience size. This effect was not observed. In retrospect, it appears that every two weeks was about right, in that it allowed attendance to become more habitual. It is interesting to note that most of Calgary's Folk Clubs also operate biweekly.

Musically, the coffee house featured mainly local performers, usually of the traditional or singer-songwriter varieties. In part this was due to an inability to provide a guaranteed fee sufficient to attract performers from out of town, but more important, in my opinion, was the abundance of highly-talented local musicians with too few places to play. Most of the performers at the coffee house had full-time jobs, while a few made their living by playing lounges, restaurants, and anything else they could find. The coffee house provided them with an opportunity to make good music for an attentive and appreciative audience, and this opportunity was much more important to them than getting their envelope at the end of the night. Of course, the envelope, too, was a form of appreciation and for some performers meant eating that week, but I don't think the importance to any musician of playing in a concert situation can be overestimated. Everyone was always eager to play at the Ski Club, and there are very few performers on the Calgary Folk scene today who haven't played there at one time or another.

The format at the coffee house gradually evolved into a three-set evening. Usually a better-known performer or group would do a set at the beginning and at the end, while a less well-known performer or group would do a middle set. Performers were chosen to provide contrast to each other.

Each set was about 35-40 minutes long, and the two breaks were around 20 minutes, giving people time to socialize (an important aspect to most), and allowing the evening to finish by 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. This was appreciated by both the audience and the volunteer workers, most of whom had to get up to go to work the next morning.

The three-set format also had the advantage of allowing new performers to try out their stuff, gain experience in front of an audience, and become better known, while at the same time guaranteeing the audience an evening of, for the most part, high-quality entertainment. This is not to say, however, that the middle sets were always given by novices -- they weren't. A good many excellent performers ended up doing the middle set for lack of other places to fit them in each season's performance schedule. Indeed, from an artistic viewpoint, the problem was not finding talent, but rather choosing from an abundance thereof.

As with other Calgary clubs, the operation of the coffee house was possible only with the assistance of several volunteers, mostly Ski Club members, to perform tasks such as running the coffee bar, selling admission tickets, setting up tables and chairs, and setting up and running the sound system. Recruitment of people for these tasks, and a certain amount of training for the coffee-bar duty, was handled by the Coffee House Coordinator (this position was ably filled by Jo-Anne Stimpson until her retirement in September 1984), who also took responsibility for month-to-month financial management and sat on the Ski Club Board of Directors.

Major financial decisions involving the coffee house were made by the Board of Directors itself. These included setting the admission price, establishing the pay schedule for performers, and purchasing sound equipment.

Performers were, for the most part, paid on a percentage basis. The performer or group doing two sets received forty per cent of the gate, while the performer or group doing the middle set received twenty per cent. The remaining forty per cent, plus any profit from the coffee bar, went to the Club. The Club purchased about \$3,500 worth of sound equipment for the coffee house.

The sound system consisted of a Shure Pro-master mixer/amplifier having six microphone input channels (high and low impedance), two graphic equalizers (63hz to 16khz by octaves), two amplifiers (each 150W into 8 ohms), monitor and effects sends, and a reverb unit; two Shure 707/708 speaker units; six Electrovoice RE10 microphones with windscreens, stands, and booms; and enough microphone and speaker wire to permit mixing

about 15m out from the stage area. This stage area was really one end of a space used for disco dancing on Friday nights. It featured three rows of floodlights -- four to a row -- which served as stage lighting, as well as two rather large ceiling-mounted JBL speakers. The disco sound system could be patched in to drive these speakers when monitors were required.

The coffee bar served five kinds of coffee (regular plus four gourmet blends), several kinds of tea, hot chocolate, hot apple cider (from concentrate), and a specialty item involving coffee, artificial flavoring, and whipped cream. In addition, volunteers were conscripted by the Coffee House Coordinator to bring a variety of home-baked goodies to each coffee house for sale at the bar. Occasionally, special events such as cheesecake night or pie night were scheduled and advertised along with the musical fare.

Publicity was the responsibility of one of the volunteers, who would keep newspapers, magazines, and radio stations informed of upcoming performances. In addition, flyers listing coffee house dates and performers, usually over a three-month period, were distributed at the coffee house, the local folk music shop (Buck Dancer's Choice), on various bulletin boards, and at other folk clubs. This necessitated making the bookings three or four months in advance, but the effort seemed to pay off in terms of audience size. It also gave performers ample preparation time.

During the boom years, from about 1981 to 1983, the audience ran fairly consistently between 50 to 80 persons, with occasional figures of more than 100, and a record of 184. By fall of 1984, the numbers were back down to 20 or 30 per night. Although there are several possible explanations for this, each with some merit, no doubt, my own opinion is that the economic recession reduced peoples' disposable income sufficiently to make them think twice about going out for an evening. This may have been exacerbated by decisions to raise the admission price, albeit by only fifty cents at a time. At the beginning of the 1983/84 season this price went from \$3.50 to \$4.00 for non-Ski Club members, which may have created a psychological barrier to someone trying to feed his kids on unemployment insurance.

I think I would emphasize to anyone wishing to start a coffee house the importance of having five or ten dedicated volunteers to make it work. Every club goes through slow periods from time to time, but an enthusiastic group will hang in there, making changes where necessary and possible, until things improve again.

CALGARY SINGERS' CIRCLE

by James Prescott

The Singers' Circle in Calgary is a small informal group that gets together on Saturday nights about once a month at the home of one or another of its members. There are about 30 interested people, of whom 10-15 will show up on any particular evening. Most of the members also attend the Rocky Mountain Folk Club. The circle has been going for about seven or eight years, and was originally started by John Gothard.

A TYPICAL EVENING

The circle is restricted to singers only (although some accompany themselves). The evening proceeds with each person in turn singing or leading a song. Depending upon the evening and the numbers present, the turn to sing may go around the circle from two to six times. There are not-so-subtle social pressures to sing every time your turn comes around; and to introduce as much new material as possible. Some members have written their own songs. Everyone joins in on any song for which they know the chorus or verses. A song may be followed immediately by another song; or by a short discussion about the history or significance of a song; or by pleasant social chit-chat. Sometimes a member will tell a story instead of singing a song. The range of songs presented covers just about anything that might be called "folk music", from Child Ballads to Connie Kaldor, and from Czech love songs to cowboy laments. For no clearly discernible reason, not many campfire singalong songs are sung.

Later in the evening there is a break for food, beverages, and socializing. Everyone contributes a plate of something, and the host or hostess only has to provide tea, coffee and juice. Afterwards the circle resumes for another circuit or two.

ORGANIZATION

Organization for the circle is minimal. The date and location for the following circle is chosen towards the end of the evening. Publicity is by word of mouth, although someone can always find out details of the next circle by telephoning me. At one time small sheets advertising the next circle were handed out at the Rocky, but I grew lazy. From time to time members of the circle have talked about setting up a telephone fan-out, but to date nothing has come of this.

COMMENTARY

The most significant decision taken was the one to exclude non-singers. This has definitely reduced the number of members. The decision was made after experience showed that instrumentalists spent much time in mutual tuning, and tended to take over much of an evening and turn it into a jam session. In Calgary, instrumentalists have many other excellent opportunities to get together, but singers have only one. One member noted, "I have so many songs inside my head but not many places to share them, especially songs that others don't know. The circle, unlike many other groups of people, will sing and will listen and will harmonize. The sharing of a song that has meaning to me can be uplifting."

The circle is for amateur singers, and is very supportive of beginning singers and beginning songwriters. Another member noted, "The important thing is preventing the development of a critical or 'one-upmanship' attitude. It works best when you can really blow a song, but have the shame neutralized, not flattering, or insincere, but the realization that not everything will work, so try something else."

There is probably also a niche (currently empty) for a more serious singers' circle, for advanced amateurs and semi-professionals, which might one day evolve along the lines of the Friends of Fiddlers' Green.

The circle also has an important social function. A member wrote, "It is a community, and supports its members, noting and often singing about the 'passages' of those who come."

Experiment over several years showed that in Calgary the highest consistent turnout could be expected on a Saturday night. An attempt was made to make it a fixed Saturday within the month, but this collapsed almost at once.

GOLEM CONCERT ROOM

by Michael Regenstreif

The Golem Concert Room in Montreal is a small (capacity is 110 with standing room), unlicensed (no booze) club that manages to attract the cream of performers on the circuit. The Golem presents 30-40 concerts per year; some of the performers in 1985 included Valdy, Connie Kaldor, Loudon Wainwright III, Kate Wolf, David Essig, John Fahey, Odetta, Marie-Lynn Hammond, Mimi Fariña, Judy Small, Josh White, Jr., Bim, Nanci Griffith and Bill Staines. Obviously, there must be something special about a venue of that size that is able to consistently attract performers of that calibre.

At the Golem, there's only one reason why we're there, and that's for the music. We try to give the artists the opportunity to perform for an audience that is there for them in a setting that is at once dignified, informal and comfortable. Golem audiences tend to be knowledgeable, open, enthusiastic, and eager to participate. This gives the performers the encouragement to be at their best and the audience the knowledge that they can count on the Golem for events of high quality, even from unfamiliar performers.

The Golem booking policy covers the gamut of traditional folk music, bluegrass, singer-songwriters, new acoustic music; blues, klezmer music, country and, on occasion, jazz, swing, and classical music. There are also occasional children's concerts and small scale theatrical productions.

Most concerts at the Golem begin at 8:30 p.m. with the artists performing two sets of 45-60 minutes each. Very popular performers will be booked for two concerts at 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. or 7:30 and 10:30. Before the concerts and during intermission coffee, tea, juices, soft drinks and pastries are available at nominal prices. There is no serving during the performances. Often artists make copies of their albums available for purchase.

The Golem is run by a small corps of volunteers headed by Michael Regenstreif, the artistic director, who is solely responsible for all booking. He attends several major festivals each summer to hear new talent and establish contacts for further booking.

The Golem's philosophy is quite simple: To present only concerts that we are willing to stand behind and to treat both the audience and performers with the respect that they deserve. When you do that, both will want to return.

The Golem Concert Room is located at 3460 Stanley Street, Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1R8, (514) 845-9171. All bookings are through Michael Regenstreif, 200 Kensington #510, Westmount, Quebec, H3Z 2B7, (514) 935-5066.



SASKATOON FOLK MUSIC ASSOCIATION: CAFE DOMINGO

by Chris Lindgren

Our organization through the years has always focused on a coffee house/concert series called Cafe Domingo. Cafe Domingo was initiated in 1977 by the Y.W.C.A. and a director was hired to organize it. It opened on Sunday nights from September to April, and hired mostly local musicians.

In 1980, when it looked like this coffee house was going to fold, a group formed to take it over. We called ourselves Saskatoon Folk Music Association, and incorporated under the Non-profit Corporations Act in Saskatchewan. Being incorporated made it easier to obtain grants for festivals and apparently gives us some liability protection if we ever electrocute a musician or have some such mishap. Incorporation also means having a board of directors, AGM's and submissions of annual reports and audited financial statements.

When we started our coffee house the musicians who played were sympathetic to our cause (i.e. were willing to play for very little money to get us going). As the years have passed, performers' expectations have changed. We have used two options for paying performers: a flat guarantee (union scale or close to it), or 60% of the gate receipts, whichever is greater. Warm-up acts get a token 10% of the gate. Nowadays, instead of booking a long tour, a lot of musicians have done single concerts, expecting additional money to cover their travel expenses. One thing that has helped us over the years has been the Regina Guild holding its events on Saturdays, making it practical for performers to come up to Saskatoon the next day.

We almost always have had a local person or group doing a 30-minute warm-up set. This has served three purposes: it gives a new musician exposure or a chance to practice new material on an audience, makes a more varied and interesting evening, and often a popular warm-up act will draw more of an audience than their obscure touring main act. The main performer generally does two 45-minute sets. We try to start promptly at 8:00, and take two breaks to sell coffee, tea juice, and home baking.

We have financed everything by gate admission and concession profits. Without the concession we would never break even. Our gate prices have been comparable to the price of a movie, with a dollar off for members, and open stage nights are cheaper as well. We have never received operational grants from anyone or donations other than home-baked goodies, volunteers' time and some assistance from the Y.W.C.A. to get started.

We have never lacked performers on open stage nights, which we have held about four times a year. The musicians are not arranged in advance; they just show up early to sign up, and then the M.C. puts everyone in an agreeable order. Each act does three songs or 10 minutes, whichever comes first. The quality of music is surprisingly good, and the kind of like opening a box of all-sorts chocolates.

In ideal situations, we have organized our operations like so: (1) One person does the booking of performers, taking suggestions from the rest of the group. A permanent post office box is very valuable for maintaining a reliable means of contact with performers, since addresses and personnel often change from year to year. (2) One person looks after the financial affairs for the complete duration of the fiscal year and also tends to be the secretary. (3) One person recruits volunteers for the concession, door, set-up, clean-up and postering. This person tends to purchase any concession supplies needed. (4) One person gets posters printed, often designing and lettering them, sometimes recruits a poster squad and/or puts them up him or herself. (5) One person sends out public service announcements and recordings to the media and is a contact if interviews are ever sought. (6) One person maintains and operates the sound system.

Occasionally someone found the time to write a brief newsletter. Its most important function was giving a long-term list of upcoming events. Sometimes we felt the "refrigerator sheets" were a more important advertising tool than anything. These contained a list of performers with a paragraph describing the musicians in more detail

than the posters, and were given out for people to take home and put on their fridges... we hoped. Through surveys, people consistently told me that they found out about us from posters and word of mouth.

Media coverage has not been so essential for us, but overall it's worth the effort. You never can tell who is listening out there... One thing that one of our media volunteers did was send a survey out to all TV/radio stations and newspapers, asking whether or not they use our p.s.a.'s, how often, etc. She also asked that the forms be signed, giving her names of real people as a contact. By enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope, she got all of her surveys back, and was able to streamline our mailing list. CBC radio has been the most helpful media contact; quite a contrast to the local newspaper, which places a higher priority on events happening in New York than Saskatoon.

By the way, our costs per night break down to something like this:

Posters.....	\$10.00
Media p.s.a.'s.....	\$10.00
Hall rentals.....	\$50.00
Misc. (phone, CAPAC, office and sound system upkeep).....	\$30.00
TOTAL.....	\$100.00

On top of this, of course, is the performer's fee. We are fortunate to have our own sound system, which is our biggest investment. We have placed a high priority on providing the best sound we can offer, which most musicians appreciate. At this date, our bank balance is around \$500.00, which is better than nothing, but not enough to enable us to take any risks with expensive performers. We have had crowds of 50 on the average, but have had turn-outs of 15 to 150, depending on performers, the weather and other unpredictable variables. We have never resorted to obtaining a liquor licence to pull in an audience.

I have not yet mentioned the two festivals that we have sponsored. Both festivals lost money, particularly the last one. I do not regret the loss of money so much as the drain of energy, hard feelings and confusion from poor communication and unclear goals. A festival requires a burst of energy and work, and in a small community there sometimes are no resources for both a healthy year-round club and a big annual festival. I would strongly advise any new organizations to consider what is more important to them.

In just a few days we are having our annual general meeting. Over the last nine months, we have been comparatively dormant, sponsoring two open stages and one concert. It's hard to say what we will decide to do in the future. Without energetic new volunteers we will do very few concerts. Maybe we need to go "low profile" in the form of singarounds and jam sessions to rejuvenate our enthusiasm.

Lately some of us have been doing a lot of talking about the "good old days of yesteryear" at the Cafe. What I remember most was the glorious pot luck suppers at someone's house just before we all trundled down to the Cafe together on Sunday evenings, over-stuffed and burping garlic at our patrons. For the most part we have been a small cozy group that enjoys each other's company, and have met each other through a common love of a very special music. This won't change for some of us, though the events we organize inevitably will.



EXCUSE ME, DID YOU SAY . . . LUNDBRECK?

by Sid Marty

It was January of 1983, and a chinook wind was roaring down off the Livingstone Range that rises above our house, a wind shaking our windows with maniacal glee. Myrna and I had put the kids to bed; now we sat toasting our feet at the wood stove, drinking tea. She took a sip, looked up at me and said matter-of-factly, "We're going to start a folk club."

"Oh? A folk club, are we?"

"Yes."

I made a mental note to try the Murchees next time and leave the Twinings on the shelf. You never know what weird chemicals they may be playing with these days. Or maybe it was that wind that was making her dotty. That and the yowl of the long-distance trucker, moaning his paeans to Coors beer, good ole boys and diesel smoke through the AM radio static.

But the dear old thing was dead serious. She was tired of our 90-mile drive to Lethbridge to get a fix of Jim Post or Stan Rogers at the folk club. The return trips over icy roads, through ground blizzards of the south country winter, made us nervous.

"Can you imagine Stan Rogers playing in Lundbreck?" she demanded. "Oh! Are you alright, dear?"

I was in fact choking on my tea. "Excuse me . . did you say . . . Lundbreck?"

Lundbreck, named after two pioneers -- Lund and Breckenridge -- has a population of 200 humans, and 300 dogs. We got our mail there, late. The kids went to school there, reluctantly. It sits on Highway 3 West at the foot of the Rockies, perhaps the most beautifully situated and ugliest hamlet in Alberta. On second thought Cowley, a few miles further east, is probably uglier.

And yet the choice was logical. Lundbreck had a good-sized hall, and it was situated midway between two towns, Pincher Creek, to the east, and Blairmore, in the Crowsnest Pass.

"It will draw from both communities," she explained.

"Uh huh. 'Course you realize," I drawled, "that as a rule the Prairie Gopher does not speak to the Pass Rat. Except during hockey games, when they exchange curses. And blows."

She raised her eyebrows knowingly. "Music," she said, "will unite them."

She was wrong, but it did bring them to Lundbreck. Still does. In fact they come from as far south as Waterton (35 miles) and as far north as, well, we've had the odd visitor from as far as Calgary.

Myrna's first step was to canvass the neighbours to see if they would support a club. Edna, busy milking a cow during the interview, gave a typical reaction. "Folk music? Never heard of it. . . Oh, you mean like a sing-song? Sure, I'll help you get that going."

The few aficionados in the area were less forthcoming. "A club here? Boy, I can tell you're new! Forget it. We thought about that once ourselves, but this is cowboy country. Nashville rules!"

If you are going to start a folk club in a small rural area like ours, be prepared for scepticism. And be prepared, like the man said, to "grab the bull by the tail and look him right in the eye".

To test the waters, we decided we'd have to put up some cash, and take a chance on losing it, too. Myrna rented the Lundbreck Hall for a Sunday night in February. (Small country halls are usually pretty reasonable, fortunately.) She purchased coffee and soft drinks, and asked local women to contribute some "baking" for the night. I put up posters, paid for some advertising, and cajoled the local radio station into giving us a plug.

We needed musicians. I would do one set myself, but we needed more variety of styles to set the tone for the embryo club. Rumour had it that there were many excellent pickers throughout the hills, but it seems they are a bit suspicious of "outsiders". (An "outsider" is anyone who wasn't born here.) One local folkie who volunteered to play was Leslie (Partridge) Schatz. I also went to see Phil Lethbridge, who has a country band. He knows scores of old fiddle tunes.

"Is this what you mean by folk music?" Phil would ask, and he would play one reel after another, non-stop.

"Yes, Phil," I told him. "Just play them like that at the concert."

Phil was the real thing. He's played the music all his life but never put a label on it. For the rest of the musicians, I did the logical thing: crawled the bars. I came with several country singers capable of doing a cross-over set on a Sunday night, and willing to do it for free. "I don't do anything on Sunday night anyway," said one, "except drink."

Two hundred and ten people showed up for the free concert. There was standing room only, and no mistake about the crowd's enjoyment of the music. One of the country groups was doing just fine until they switched on their rhythm ace. The crowd started to mutter, and we soon heard shouts of "Turn off the drummer!", a sure sign that lovers of acoustic music were not to be gainsaid.

At intermission, we elected officers who would form the "Livingstone Folk Music Society". My spouse cleverly declined to stand for president (which she has since become) and I found myself pressed into the job. Most of the other officers/directors were strangers to us and to each other. A love of the music was our common bond.

Why form a club, why not "Keep it simple"?

You can keep it simple if you just meet in a living room and pass the hat to pay performers. We wanted more than that because we live in isolation and spend enough time in the living room. We wanted a night out, socializing, a couple of beers and good music, a break from the usual hill-billy routine.

If you are going to charge admission and rent a hall, then you should form a non-profit society. There are many reasons for this:

1. You must guarantee payment to the performer, pay hall rent, buy supplies, etc. You must manage the money correctly, and you must appear to be managing it correctly in the public eye. A good treasurer is perhaps your most important asset.
2. It is better, from a legal point of view, for the society to be responsible for money transactions so that private persons do not wind up "holding the bag" in case of financial problems or disputes with performers, agents, etc.
3. If you want a liquor licence (to sell beer and wine), you must be an official organization (at least in Alberta).
4. Non-profit societies are eligible for grants from Departments of Culture, etc. You may also qualify for capital grants from local culture/recreation boards, as we did to help defray the cost of sound equipment.
5. A society must hold elections, which allows other people to get involved with the club: it keeps you accessible to the community's needs, which is good for you. You will feel less Olympian this way.
6. Perhaps most importantly, having officers and directors means that you are not trying to run the whole show by yourself, which is important. There are a number of positions that have to be manned either by the executive or by club members:

Artistic Director: In a small club, this should be the President's role. She books the acts and negotiates fees, assisted by the Secretary. She makes sure the Public Relations man and Stage Manager are kept apprised of who's coming and what is needed. She's the club motivator. She is very jealous of her artistic control, because she knows the audience. She resists attempts by other club or circuit organizers to book acts into her club that she feels are wrong for her audience.

Rule: The people will always tell the president about acts they disliked, but not vice-versa.

Treasurer: Find a good one and hang onto them forever.

Stage Manager: In a small club may do lighting and sound, run the board.

Set-up committee: They are easy to find.

Clean-up committee: They scrub the toilets at 11 p.m.; very hard to find, but valuable. You will be doing this yourself sometimes. All part of the glamour.

Kitchen committee: Includes food purchase, preparations, clean-up.

Want to bankrupt yourself fast? Give all the above people and their suddenly blooming legions of friends free admission. In our club everyone pays to get in except the musicians and their guest (one per each).

Here is how our club works, sort of.

About a month before a concert date, I start nagging the president (my wife) by wondering out loud who is going to be playing for us. The president ignores me for about one week, and then she panics. She disappears into the telephone and calls up people she has heard about, or she calls up other clubs to find out who they are featuring. Actually, she does book a few concerts several months in advance. I wouldn't dream of questioning her system, because so far it always works.

At the last moment, the performer sends me some promotional material (I do the public relations), I write a blurb for a poster, and pass the picture and blurb to a friend who makes the posters on his computer for free. Then I do a press release and some ads, and take them down to the local paper, which I refer to as "the Goat Breeder's Gazette", because I hate goats. I explain for the twentieth time what a press release is to the lady with the blue tinted hair, and why they should publish it without charging us

for it. I offer for the twentieth time tickets, so that their ace reporter John Prosetit can come review the concert. At this juncture Blue Tint may shake her head mournfully and remind me, "We don't go out at night, dear." They should print that one on their masthead.

Leaving this haven of new journalism, I plunge into the main street throngs, feeling out of place without a chew of Copenhagen tucked under my lip. Furtively, I slink from doorway to doorway putting up posters. So much for advertising, which might also include the occasional newsletter.

Friends, try and get your star performers to call at least one day before they arrive, just so you know they haven't totally forgotten you. Yes, just try. They like to appear at the hall about five minutes before the sound check. They seem calm in the face of your hysterically joyful greeting: "Thank Christ, you're here!" "Of course I'm here," they say majestically. "Where else should I be? By the way, do you have a dressing room?"

Ah yes, the dressing room. Ours is tiny, a cloak-room, really. You have to go outside to change your mind, as they say. The dressing room should have a door that closes, a table, a chair, a mirror, an ashtray, etc.

Hopefully the set-up committee is setting up tables and chairs. If not, to hell with it and let the audience set up their own, because the most important items are the stage, lighting, and the sound system. (I'm also the stage manager.) The sound check, done before the concert, is vitally important. It's 20 below, it's 7:30 and already people are banging on the doors to get in. To hell with them. They can get back into their pick-up trucks until everything is done; they'll just get in everybody's way.

Where the hell is that sound system, which as a new club, we are forced to rent from a local musician who also acts as sound man? But where is he? Frantically I look around for the sight of his flashing locks. Sonofa...

"Trent! You crazy bastard, where have you been?"

"Jeez, sorry, man. I lost a 15-inch bin off the truck."

"YOU DID WHAT?" "Yeah, I had to go back and get it. Still there, right on the freakin' white line..."

Now here is the bin, a 15-inch speaker in it. It is bashed up but, A MIRACLE, IT WORKS! I believe in the Great God Traynor! (Take note: you must buy a sound system of your own to avoid systems that are moved around on flat bed trucks at 20 below.)

The women are in the kitchen (yes, I'm afraid so) heating up the sausage rolls and coffee, setting out the goodies from the baking committee. The set-up committee arrives and he starts setting up tables. The sound check goes alright, but there is a continuous hum coming from the bins, which the star of the show pretends to ignore. There is nothing you can do about this electronic "om". The sound system is communing with a greater power than you: Calgary Power.

The people file in, the bar and kitchen are open.

Some are smiling, and some look incredibly glum. Why is that? It's a country hall; they are talking about the drought, about deaths, births, weddings.

It's time for the opening act. He plays accordion, banjo, and piano. It might have been better if he'd left the banjo out this time. . . He's a kitchen musician, well loved in this area. He's the real thing, the very root of the music, and he soon has everyone tapping their toes and singing along. He'll never play at Massey Hall, or even at other folk clubs. He probably wouldn't want to anyway. But he's here because he feels welcome.

As a musician myself, I get frankly ticked off at the jaded attitude of some clubs, where to be local means to be not worth a listen, where the audience is trained to believe that if you're not Tom Paxton or Connie Kaldor (two of my favorite performers, by the way), then you can't be worth the candle. We are trying to avoid that kind of pseudo-sophistication, which is destructive to the spirit of this music, and which denies venues to developing Canadian performers.

The opening act gets an encore, as usual, and it's intermission time. The bar is open. We close it during the sets, because this is a place to listen and enjoy the music, not to get loaded. Drunks are not tolerated.

Our main act could be Garnet Rogers, Bim, or any number of well-known performers who have played the club. Let's say it's Willie P. Bennett tonight. To those of us who know his stuff, it's a great satisfaction to see him play our little hall. To the others, it's a revelation about the quality of our front rank, yet "undiscovered", singer-songwriters. Willie sells a lot of records tonight. There are also one or

two who don't like Willie, but they are probably tone deaf, or have some kind of mental problem. Willie gets an encore, he gets a standing ovation. The night is over and it's my turn to clean the restrooms.

A word about performers' billets. They will need a place to rehearse, relax, etc., in your home. A private room is wonderful if you have one for them, rather than a pallet down by the furnace. Or a bunk with your two boys and their ghetto blasters. Performers play best for you when they are rested and fresh.

"Also, find out if he's a carnivore or a vegetarian before you whip up that pan of elk stew, Myrna."

And a word about fees. I can't tell you what we pay, because that's the club's private business. But most performers will negotiate. You are, after all, non-profit, and offering them a venue. If you can tie in with another club, or offer a gig on a night when they are twiddling their thumbs in a near-by city, you might get a break on their fee. One thing is certain: you can't afford to bankrupt your club to pay an outrageous fee that smacks more of Las Vegas than an Alberta folk club. There are some performers you will never get, because you can't meet their demands. That is too bad, for them, because your folk club, full of appreciative people, is one helluva fun place to play. We started this club because we wanted to have a good time with the music; hope you do the same.



THE KELOWNA FOLK CLUB

by Warren Sparks

We are in our third season of the Kelowna Folk Club. Some were there the first night and haven't missed a "club night". Many others form a healthy turnover of newcomers. Having such stalwart supporters makes the organizers more determined than ever to continue presenting the best performers of folk music.

The Kelowna Folk Club is a non-profit society formed to create, develop and promote folk music and related cultural, intellectual and social activities in the Okanagan Valley. The organizers are not entertainers but are true believers in folk music and fun with friends. A local Celtic style folk group, Mullinger, ably mystify, insult, and entertain the audience at each concert as host band. Each night, a new guest is introduced from near and far, these guests continue to amaze even the organizers.

We give our thanks to the Kelowna and District Arts Council, The Capital News, The Daily Courier, CKIQ, CKOV, Shaw Cable TV, CHBC, Labatt's Breweries, Harder, Pushor, Hannah & Company, and all the many volunteers and sponsors who have made the club possible.

To date our series has featured Bim, the Banfields, Su-Chong Lim, Draught Porridge, Ceard, Cahoots, Paul Hann, Tom See, Eric Nagler, Roman Royco, Stephen Fearing, Vic Bell, Holly Arntzen, Valdy, Jim Keelaghan, Grit Laskin & Ian Robb, Barry & Lyn Luft, Connie Kaldor, Cathy Cush & Kevin Doyle, Bill Bourne & Brian Pollack, Margaret Christl, Stephen Fearing & Triple Sec, 3-Way Street, Ken Hamm, and Prairie Crossing.

Tickets are \$6.00, the hall holds 240, and we serve beer, wine, popcorn, chips, nuts, and T-shirts. The East Kelowna Hall has good kitchen, stage and practice facilities and is located along Kelowna's scenic tour of orchards. Last year we bought stage lights and this year a new back-drop with the Club's logo.

We are one of the few folk clubs in B.C. and fortunately the Okanagan seems to be one of the better places for one. We hope one day the B.C. government will see this too and help our folk artists with touring subsidies as they do any other artist in B.C.

We don't profess any special skills or have any advice for other folk club organizers. We got hooked at the Calgary Folk Club and the Rocky Mountain Folk Club and were lucky to get a folk club started here.

It's a lot of work mixed with fun like anything else in life. The performers that appear at the club enrich our lives with the chance to share with them the joys, sorrows, and inspiration of the music. We're proud to share a role in the greatest cultural and artistic medium in Canada. When in Kelowna, please pay us a visit -- we'll all be glad you did. The club's address is P.O. Box 24, Okanagan Mission, B.C., V0H 1S0, or phone Wendy and Warren Sparks at (604) 764-8065.



HARBOUR FOLK SOCIETY

by Sandy Greenberg

The Harbour Folk Society, in existence since 1980, has as its goal the promotion of folk music, folk dance, and story-telling. We hold a once-a-month Pub Night, usually the first Saturday of each month at Mount St. Vincent University during the school term and at St. Mary's University during the summer months. We have a featured guest plus open mike sets and foster a concert-type atmosphere. Our features are usually traditional or contemporary folk musicians. We are fairly low budget, but are interested in having touring musicians at our Pub Nights. Contact person is Sandy Greenberg, 2567 Wood Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 3A7, (902) 429-8544.

THE ROCKY

by John Leeder

The Rocky Mountain Folk Club is now over ten years old -- not the oldest club in the country, or even in Calgary, but still old enough to be regarded as an "institution" (although we're hardly hidebound or calcified -- this season alone has seen important changes) and old enough to have learned some things along the way which might help people starting folk clubs elsewhere in the country.

The Rocky (yes, people do call it that) started in January 1976; at that time the Calgary Folk Club was getting mostly turnaway crowds and it was obvious that there would be support for a second place for Calgarians to hear folk music. From the beginning the Rocky took its format from that of the Calgary Folk Club as it existed at that time. This way of setting up the evening has continued to spread -- at present ten clubs in Alberta and one in B.C. run along the same lines -- so it must be fairly exportable. Perhaps clubs in the rest of the country will take it up -- and perhaps they'll call it the "Calgary format" after the Calgary Folk Club who started it in Canada.

A NIGHT AT THE ROCKY: The "Calgary Format"

The Rocky takes place in rented premises: the Hounsfield Heights/Briar Hill Community Centre, which we've used for almost ten years. The club runs from September to April, every second Friday, totaling 14 or 15 nights in all. Most evenings at the club are opened by the houseband, who do a set lasting about 30 minutes. This will be followed by a break of approximately 15 minutes, then the evening's guest sets. There are usually three major sets in addition to the houseband, with a break between each. There may be three sets by local performers, or two by an out-of-town act interspersed with one local. Sets by touring musicians may be as long as 45 minutes, while Calgary musicians may do as little as 20 minutes depending on the strength and experience of the performer. (Economics dictate that most touring performers do two sets, while rarely does a local performer do more than one. Unfortunate but necessary.) In addition, there may be a "floor set" -- three numbers by a first-timer or less experienced person. Many floor set performers graduate to full sets later on. As the evening carries on, the length of the breaks may be shorter, depending on how rapidly the bar clears and how late we're running. All sets are introduced and closed off by an emcee. At the end of the evening there's usually a short "coffee break" and the evening's performers get on stage in a group and sing chorus songs -- "The Glasgow Orphans' Choir", this part of

the evening is called. The length of the Choir will depend on how late it starts and how much chorus singing there's been during the evening -- it gives the audience their "fix" of singing if they haven't had enough. The evening usually ends by 12:30, with the singing of "Wild Mountain Thyme".

The touchstones of the "Calgary format" in its purest form (of course, they're not universal from club to club) are; the houseband; the emcee; and the bar.

THE HOUSEBAND:

The core of the original houseband was Dick Howe and the late "Bugs" McKeith; they were joined by "whoever showed up"; the list of sit-ins includes Dick Lofthouse, Diana Knaak, Joe Henderson, Ben Gadd, Jeff Horne and Mary Ross; Dick Lofthouse became a regular and the name "The Boys Of Blue Hill" was acquired; this later changed to "Cairngorm". (Dick Lofthouse continued this name for later bands not connected with the Rocky.) After Dick's departing in the fall of 1976 the group stabilized as Dick Howe, Tim Rogers and Pauline Morgan. (Dick Howe is the only original Rocky organizer who's still involved in running the club.) Somewhere along the line the name "Ceard" (pronounced "cay-art") was adopted. In 1978 Patti Rogers joined the group on Pauline Morgan's departure, and this configuration remained until the fall of 1985. (Kevin Doyle and Scott Rogers were short-term members.)

Since September 1985, when Tim and Patti took leave of absence from Ceard, the houseband has been of a looser format, with Dick Howe drawing on a pool of musicians from week to week, so that the personnel has been rather ad hoc on any given night. Joining Dick, from time to time, have been Margaret Christl, Ron Nolan, "Big" John Campbell, Mark Fuglem, Ron Casat, Ken Persson, and John Leeder.

The houseband's functions are many. It "warms up" the audience so that they will be responsive when the guest performers come on. It contributes to the overall well-roundedness of the evening (for example, if the featured guests are expected to be heavy on the instrumental end of things, the houseband will include several chorus songs in their set). Thirdly, the houseband maintains the "feel" of the club, making sure that the kind of music the regulars like and the club is known for are represented. In the case of the Rocky, this means Canadian and British traditional and folk-like music. So the selection of the houseband's set can be actually a rather complex function when all these elements have to be kept in mind.

THE EMCEE

The emcee opens and closes the sets, introduces the performers, makes announcements, and so on. In a deeper sense he acts as what folklorists call a "ritualmaster", carrying on the club's traditions (even such ongoing sillinesses as the Plugging of the Sausage Rolls take on a ceremonial quality which the regulars miss if it's left out). The emcee should be able to make newcomers rapidly feel part of what's going on while giving the regulars the sense of being an essential element of the evening. Performers should be introduced in such a way as to make the audience want to welcome them.

The Rocky has had three permanent emcees in its lifetime: Gareth Morgan, Tim Rogers and John Leeder. My own experience has been that an emcee has to learn the task -- it doesn't spring from nowhere -- and in a sense has to find his or her own style within him or herself and build on it. Things that don't work for me are one-liners -- I stick to situation humour -- and explicitness; when I try to get serious it doesn't work, so I try to make serious points in light-hearted ways. What I consider the most successful introductions are those which make the performer laugh just before going onstage. But what I recommend to beginning emcees is to keep the above principles and the aims of your club in mind, while rarely referring explicitly to them on stage, and let your own personality flesh out the details. Be yourself, or yourself slightly larger than life, and the rest will follow.

THE BAR

Mixing booze and music is a controversial issue in folk music today. It shouldn't be -- British folk clubs have operated in pubs for decades, and drinking songs are part of the tradition. But many North Americans seem to feel that alcohol has no place at folk music functions (you can pick up this attitude by implication in some of the other articles in this issue). Touring musicians have often told us, in effect, "Booze is usually the kiss of death to folk music performances, but in Alberta you seem to have figured out how to handle it." Maybe some sociologist will come up with a reason why the supposed land of cowboys and yahoos should develop a sane mixture of alcohol and folk music. For lack of space and expertise, I decline to speculate.

The axiom to keep in mind is, "The music isn't there to sell the booze, the booze is there to sell the music." The bar should not be looked at primarily as an extra source of revenue for the club (it does that, but on a smaller scale than might be expected). Rather it is there to provide a relaxed atmosphere for listening to the music and for socializing.

Liquor regulations in Alberta allow us to run our own bar (under rather stringent restrictions). We can thus keep control and make sure the music comes first, whereas if we were operating on the premises of a commercial outlet whose first priority was to sell drink, our goals would come into conflict with theirs and problems would arise. As it is, we close the bar during the sets so that people can listen to the music without distractions.

The practical effect is that the intervals between sets tend to be longer than those in a coffeehouse, to allow for bar purchases, washroom breaks and socializing. As well, the performers' sets tend to be shorter than in non-bar clubs, governed by the time it takes to consume a beer and, as Hamish Imlach put it, "the capacity of the human bladder".

People unfortunately expect drinking to be associated with drunkenness and rowdiness, and in the early stages of any folk club you can expect instances to arise. As the audience learns how to behave at a folk club, it becomes more and more self-controlling, since people are there to listen to the music and are quick to shush their neighbours if they're not quiet. Otherwise, usually a discreet announcement from the emcee suffices. Beyond that, a quiet chat during the break, explaining what the club is all about and offering a refund if the people would rather go somewhere where they can talk and drink, usually does the trick. At the Rocky we haven't had a rowdy table in years, although we occasionally have to educate a group of newcomers concerning excessive chatter during the performance.

ORGANIZATION

The Rocky organization exists on three levels. First, we are a society under the Societies Act of Alberta, and have the usual elected officers in place. In practice, only the Treasurer's office corresponds to real-world duties; the formal organization exists for purposes of grant applications and liquor licences and not much else.

"The workers" or "the organizers" do the actual work of running the club. Over the years the necessary functions have been analyzed pretty thoroughly, and every worker has certain assigned duties for which they take responsibility. Some of these functions take place on club nights (e.g. setup, sound, teardown, door, beer tickets, etc.) and some are performed during the week (e.g. publicity, bar purchasing, bookings). I'm not going to list all the "jobs" here, as many are obvious and many are detailed in other articles in this issue.

All workers receive free admission, free drinks, and the right to bring an occasional guest. A few workers who have extra-heavy jobs on club nights (e.g. bartending) or who spend a lot of time during the week (e.g. houseband, bar purchasing) receive nominal honoraria. Any worker who cannot do his or her job on a given night is expected to take responsibility for arranging for someone else to do it.

Lastly, at general meetings overall policy is decided. Meetings take place whenever enough issues accumulate that people feel decisions have to be made. All workers have a voice and a vote (although in practice most decisions are made by consensus and voting rarely takes place). Meetings do not tend to over-formality (people used to more structured organizations are usually surprised by the casualness their first time), but the decisions get made. This structure seems to be flexible enough that the club has survived numerous major personnel changes and job shifts without losing its essential character. We are alert to individual overloads and for the most part have been able to retain workers in different portfolios; individuals rarely resign for reasons other than leaving Calgary or major lifestyle changes.

FINANCES

Shortly after I became involved with the Rocky in September 1976, a major organizer resigned abruptly and we found ourselves with no bank balance and no sound system, almost in the position of a club starting from scratch. So our experiences may be edifying to new clubs elsewhere.

For the next few years we operated on a policy of paying musicians on a percentage-of-the-gate basis. The percentage was 100%, less expenses -- we deducted our rent from the door receipts and divided the rest among the performers. The bar profits were kept separate as a contingency fund. In practice this meant booking almost entirely local performers; an occasional touring person would have the confidence to assume that the night would be a sellout and that he or she would make a specific amount as a consequence, but we would not guarantee. Performers realized that we were honest and up-front about this arrangement and there'd be no hard feelings if an agreement could not be reached. Too, local performers realized that they'd make more money if more people came out, so they tended to act as publicizers for their night.

We also during this period had a borrowed sound system

After a couple of years we reached the point where we could count on full houses most nights, and also had built up enough of a contingency fund that we could afford to offer guarantees to performers, knowing that a single light house wouldn't break the bank. We drew up a schedule of fees for local performers (so much for a solo, so much for a duo, etc.) loosely based on expected revenue from a full house, and also were able to occasionally spring for extra for a major touring performer. At the same time, we had developed a track record as a credible organization and were able to apply for grants. Our first grant went to purchase our sound system, which was specifically chosen for our performance space and has been upgraded over the years since. We currently receive yearly grants from the provincial Department of Culture, based on performers' fees, and some years we receive money from the Calgary Region Arts Foundation for capital expenditures. We have a healthy bank account, so that the current downturn in audiences which is affecting all Calgary clubs, while it's nibbling at our savings, isn't threatening the club's survival. We sell approximately 50 season tickets, at a price amounting to a couple of free clubs. This money is collected in September and used to pay our rent in advance, thus ensuring a good relationship with the Community Association.

I would urge anyone starting a new club to follow our experience. Be cautious, don't take financial risks, build a sound organization slowly and carefully, from the ground up.

BOOKINGS

Bookings are an art rather than a science, and there are probably as many theories as there are artistic directors. Two trends seem to be clear: "theme evenings" versus "all-round evenings". The Rocky tends to the latter camp. On any evening we try to balance off as many elements as we can, both in types of music and in configurations. We try not to book, for example, two strong instrumentalists on the same night, or two solo male contemporary singer-songwriters, or two large groups (this latter becomes a consideration for financial reasons, as well as for the sound person's sanity), or two expensive touring performers, and so on. Strong local performers capable of headlining should not be used as middle sets for out-of-town groups, nor should two be booked on the same night -- save them for when they'll do you the most good. As well, it's a good idea to include at least one "good draw", someone who is known to attract audience, in each night;

above. Many other principles could be expounded, most of them obvious if one thinks about them with the club's basic goals clearly in mind. The bookings person should be someone with a good knowledge of the local scene, should attend as many other folk music events as possible, for example, and have communication skills and diplomatic ability. But the job can be learned (I used to do it myself, even!). The most essential ingredient is love for and familiarity with the music.

The Rocky's bookings are currently handled by Daphne Rackstraw, whose address is 3319 Barr Rd. N.W., Calgary, Alberta, T2L 1M7. The Rocky's other artistic directors in the past have included Tim Rogers, John Leeder, and Dick Lofthouse.

SOUND

An adequate sound system, and a competent person operating it, are essential to the success of any musical evening greater than a living-room gathering or small-hall event. The sound operator is as important as any performer; yet it becomes less and less easy to find people with expertise in mixing acoustic music, particularly in groups. A person who not only has this talent but knows the equipment, knows the room and knows the music is a godsend. If your club has someone like this, hang on to him or her at all costs! If not, it pays to develop someone and make it worth his or her while to stick with it and master the skills. If your club can manage it, an honorarium would be appropriate; if not, lots of support, recognition, and perks are called for.

The Rocky has recognized the importance of continuity in this vital function and has had only three regular sound people in its history. Ken Persson is the incumbent; Tim Rogers was his predecessor; before him, Dick Lofthouse handled the job. People who have filled in for Ken occasionally during the last few years include Mike MacLeod, Don Gowan, Bob deWolff and Carmen Zuorro.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

In the past the Rocky has sponsored dance workshops, special concerts, day-long events, etc., but these have never really caught on and are no longer extant. We feel that we put enough energy into running the club, and as we get older we have even less left for other activities. The only outside event operated by the Rocky in recent years was our segment of the Folk Club Tent at the Calgary Folk Festival:

We do have a few annual activities other than the club night. An end-of-season banquet acts as a special reward for the workers as well as a darn good time. Most years,

weather and space availability permitting, we've had a camping weekend in September, invitees being Rocky workers and season ticket supporters, as well as "friends of the club", including organizers of other folk clubs in Calgary. In a similar vein, this March we held a winter sports day and potluck at a lodge west of Calgary, which was successful and likely will become an annual event.

DETAIL WORK

Folk music events don't have to be slipshod, sloppily-run affairs. At the Rocky we pride ourselves on our attention to detail. It matters that the person on the door be cheerful and have a good memory for names. It matters that the tables be arranged so that access to the stage and the house lights isn't blocked. It's important that you not run out of someone's favourite brand of beer halfway through the evening. I'm sure you can think of lots of other examples. No detail is too small to be given thought to and, if necessary, discussed at a general meeting and a policy arrived at. It's not nit-picking or obsessiveness, it's an effort to arrive at the best possible environment for presenting folk music within your capabilities.

One of the greatest compliments the Rocky ever received, to my mind, came from one of our regulars, an NDP worker and compulsive organizer, who says he goes to the Rocky because: "I can relax. All the organizing details are already looked after!"

TRADITIONS AND FOLKLORE

As in any organization which has been around for ten years, certain traditions have grown up. We almost always start the evening with "Farewell to Nova Scotia"; we almost always end with "Wild Mountain Thyme"; any time we leave either out we can count on getting flak from the regulars. The Flogging of the Sausage Rolls has become a fixture, and John Campbell's jokes are becoming one. Workers' birthdays are usually recognized with a cake and the singing of "Happy Birthday". The list goes on. If we do something once, and people like it, we do it again. If people like it the second time, it becomes an Official Tradition, complete with ritualistic overtones.

"Uncle Rocky" is a genial old gent who seems to personify the spirit of the club, especially when dispensing largesse: "Let Uncle Rocky buy you a beer!" "The Rocky" itself has come to exist in people's minds as a force greater than the sum of its organizers. When all goes smoothly, it seems to run itself. Even when there are backstage hassles or upsets during the week, with the first notes of "Farewell to Nova Scotia" everything seems to fall into place and another evening at the Rocky Mountain Folk Club unfolds.

THE OLD SOD FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY by Vince Veness, with Ian Robb

The Old Sod Society, a head-turning name if ever there was one, offers an eclectic selection of folk music concerts and folk related activities to the community of Ottawa.

The Old Sod exists "to encourage the study, appreciation and enjoyment of folk music in all its aspects...and to develop community understanding and common interest in folk music." (From the Constitution of the Old Sod Folk Music Society.) To these ends, the Old Sod offers a series of folk music concerts featuring performers from both sides of the pond who sing for the most part in the tradition. In addition, special interest community groups operate under the Old Sod umbrella to offer:

- Northwest Clog Morris Dancing
- Cotswold Morris Dancing
- English Country Dancing
- Sacred Harp (Shape Note) Singing

In its present form, the Old Sod Society is a non-profit, community organization run by a dedicated core of fifteen to twenty people, most of whom are also involved in one or more of the special interest groups. Though it seems today like a smoothly run organization, things were not always this easy.

Before 1983, when the group first began to take on its current appearance, the Old Sod existed in the form of one Ian Robb and one Terry Rudden, troubadours at large. Though sheer effort, the two of them managed to stage several big name acts, develop a local interest in music, and more or less break even. Unfortunately, a number of severe losses put the entire operation in jeopardy, and it was decided to appeal to the membership at large for ideas and assistance.

From a mailing list of some 250 names, about 40 responded to the first organizational meeting, a number which dropped to about 20 by the first concert several months later. This ad hoc group held 13 concerts over the first season, mixing large scale (200 to 300 people) hall concerts with smaller (50 to 60 people) house concerts. The refusal of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario to grant a Liquor Licence for the final concert of the season (because Old Sod was not a "recognized" group) led to the establishment of the more formal organization now in place. This included a slate of 9 Directors, Constitution and By-laws, and set membership fees.

For those contemplating the formation of a folk club, these items are discussed in detail below, with particular emphasis on the organizational side. Please note that Old Sod is still young and very much in a state of transition, as we come to better understand our capabilities and our market.

OPERATIONS

The Old Sod concert season runs generally from September through to May or June with an average of two concerts per month. The actual number of concerts is determined by who's on tour and our overall workload. We try to do bookings as far in advance as possible (several months if we can), though some performers have been booked in as little as three weeks (something we don't want to make a habit of!).

The cost of the performers is determined at the time of booking, with one of two techniques usually employed: either flat rate, or guaranteed minimum with percentage of the profit (typically 50 to 70%). For those performers flying in from the United States (which include most UK performers on North American tour), we also provide transportation from point of entry. This usually means a return trip to Montreal, sometimes Watertown, NY. After some bad experiences with the US exchange rate, we also now insist on quoting performers' fees in Canadian dollars. Ticket prices are set to cover our costs, and reflect our non-profit philosophy. They are usually between \$5.00 and \$7.50 for each event.

One of Old Sod's biggest ongoing problems is the lack of a fixed venue, causing, we think, the bulk of our attendance problems. Depending on such factors as the popularity of the performer, the day of the week (this is Ottawa, remember), the weather and other competing events, our attendance ranges from a low of 20 to a high of 300. Anticipating and accommodating this variance is no small difficulty, where the cost of space is more or less proportional to the capacity. In addition, the facility selected must allow both liquor permits and admission charges.

To meet these requirements, we have over the past couple of years come to rely on the Community Centres for our larger hall concerts, and members' houses for our smaller concerts. Arrangements with local taverns have proven unsatisfactory, and most government venues require free admission to the general public, expecting that you will be entirely funded by grants. (Ever wonder where your tax dollars go or where free enterprise went?)

A hall is generally selected when there are two or more performers in the group, or more than 100 people expected. Extra costs include the hall, sound reinforcement system, and liquor permits. House concerts on the other hand offer a cosy venue for most single performers with chair rentals the only major expense, outside of the performers' fee. Liquor at house concerts is a BYOB affair in keeping with this approach.

In preparing to stage a typical hall concert (e.g. Muddy York), the hall will have been booked at the earliest possible moment (3 or 4 months in advance if possible), and the sound equipment will have been reserved 3 or 4 weeks in advance. Who does what is covered in the organization section. Also done 3 to 4 weeks in advance is a newsletter mailout to the membership, with press releases sent out to local and regional newspapers, radio and TV stations on a timely basis as the concert date approaches. Note that most papers and stations offer free public service announcements for community events and functions.

On the day of the concert, work begins in earnest early in the afternoon with the collection and setup of the sound system, culminating in the performer sound check about one hour before the start of the concert. This of course assumes functioning equipment and the timely arrival of the performer! About two hours before the concert, volunteers arrive to set up chairs and tables, and prepare the kitchen (start the coffee, apple cider, cool the beer, etc.). About one hour before start time the door cash, membership and all other non-food sales (records, T-shirts) are set up and manned. With a half-hour to go, the audience starts arriving.

The buzz of conversation fills the hall, friends new and old mingle, and the hungry and thirsty mill around the bar, their appetites whetted by the aroma of hot apple cider and home baked goodies. A variety of beer and wine cool the palates of those desiring something stronger while everyone waits for the lights to dim.

Though there seems to be a mad dash for the door at the end of the evening (due either to propensity to be in bed early--this being Ottawa--or to an excess of "short" announcements!) there is no shortage of volunteers to help put away chairs and tables. We are usually cleaned up and out before the witching hour and headed off to a quiet post concert get together at someone's home.

House concerts by contrast tend to be a lot less frenetic, with substantially lower overhead (most of which is chair rental). An hour or so of shifting furniture and

setting up chairs and lights (and of course those home baked goodies!) see the bulk of the work done. As well, the performers seem to be much more intimate, with the audience more inclined to sing along, enjoying the kind of cozy ambience which is hard to capture in a large hall. It is a credit to our patrons, too, that the house has always been returned in one piece, though I expect the owners experience more than a twinge of trepidation as sixty people wander in!

ORGANIZATION

The Old Sod is a membership organization run by a board of nine Directors elected at the annual general meeting. Though not currently incorporated, we govern ourselves according to the constitution and bylaws established when the group formalized itself to gain the recognition of the Liquor Licensing Board of Ontario. Essentially this means that the Directors are responsible to the membership at large, an annual general meeting is held once each year, and a set of books is kept.

Members join for one year at a time, with the membership year running from September to the following August. This is intended to coincide with the concert season, and thereby reduces some of the paperwork. Memberships are currently \$10.00 for a single, and \$15.00 for a family (any number of children), with a special \$5.00 "mailing list only" category for those who live outside of the Ottawa area. Members receive irregular newsletters describing upcoming concerts plus other related articles, and a membership card which entitles them to a discount at virtually all Old Sod events.

The day to day operations of the club reside for the most part in the hands of the Directors, who meet informally as required to resolve planning and logistical issues. After some initial fine tuning, the organizational hierarchy now consists of a President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and five other Directors. All positions have clearly defined duties and areas of responsibility, more to spread the work evenly than for any other reason. Indeed, many in this highly motivated and independent group are familiar with several areas, providing good backup coverage should someone be absent for awhile. The positions and duties are described below for those who are interested.

PRESIDENT: Currently Mr. Gord Peeling, the president represents the overall philosophy of the club, both to the members and the public at large. In addition, he is responsible for

ensuring that the business of the club proceeds in an orderly fashion and that all loose ends are taken care of. The latter seems to be particularly important in a concert promoting organization.

VICE-PRESIDENT: Currently Mr. Ian Robb, the VP has two somewhat diverse roles within Old Sod. The foremost role is that of Artistic Director, with responsibility for booking performers, and generally representing Old Sod to performers and their agents. This invariably includes setting the fee scale and seeing that the assorted contracts and immigration papers are signed and returned. In addition, the VP also helps with the overall organization of the club, filling in for the President when necessary.

SECRETARY: is responsible for collecting and maintaining the membership list, though in these modern times a separate computerized list is kept by someone with ready access to computer equipment, and for taking and preparing the minutes of any formal meetings.

TREASURER: is responsible for keeping the books in good order and ensuring that there is sufficient money on hand to pay the performer. Generally speaking, all receipts must be submitted to the Treasurer, who then issues the cheque. In this way club finances can be easily controlled and monitored. This type of record keeping has also proven invaluable in determining where the money is actually spent, allowing action to be taken where necessary to either reduce costs, or find better, cheaper ways of doing the same thing.

PUBLICITY: one of the hardest, and most important jobs, this position could actually use several people. The person in charge of publicity is responsible for putting together the newsletters (a task which usually involves several people for writing, typing, mailing, etc.), preparing press releases and other advertising, and notifying newspapers, radio stations, TV stations and anyone else who will listen about what events are coming up. Experience has shown that there is no substitute for good advertising in producing good turnouts.

KITCHEN: definitely a job for someone of fine palate (!), the kitchen manager is responsible for setting up and running the kitchen/bar the night of the concert. This includes such behind the scenes work as ensuring that there is sufficient food and drink (a dedicated volunteer undertakes to apply for the liquor licence and purchase the alcoholic beverages), as well as a supply of glasses, paper towels etc. They are also responsible for bringing volunteers to help man the kitchen.

Both patrons and performers have come to look forward to our delectable delights, making them an essential part of a successful evening!

CONCERT MANAGER: This person is responsible for booking suitable space in advance of the concert, and reserving a sound system for the concert (not applicable to house concerts). At Old Sod, this individual ensures that the sound equipment is delivered to the hall, set up, and returned to the renter after the concert. It is our experience that it is well worthwhile having someone within the club undertake to learn to set up and operate the sound equipment, both for consistency of sound, and because a professional soundman can be a major expense. Note, however, that a sound job poorly done can ruin the evening for both the performer and the audience alike.

GRANTS: This is a new area of responsibility within Old Sod, set up largely to find alternative ways of financing performers that we would like to have, but have been unable to afford. This person is essentially responsible for seeking out applicable grants, and completing the necessary applications.

Several local and provincial organizations often have grants available for which a folk club is eligible, especially when featuring Canadian performers. The Ontario Arts Council is one such organization which offers grants to smaller groups attempting to stage cultural events.

There is no way that a non-profit, community oriented group such as Old Sod could exist without a strong volunteer base. Indeed all of the above individuals donate both time and resources to making the events successful. However, it

is essential that other members be encouraged to get involved on a regular basis. Not only does this bring new blood and new ideas into the organization, but it tends to make it a lot more fun all the way around.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Old Sod Society is also involved in a number of activities outside of the concert series. Many of the Old Sod regulars (and irregulars) are actively involved in one or more groups, providing as they do FUN, exercise, and a terrific alternative to TV (eh?!). Participatory in nature, these groups provide a superb forum for those who want to be more than passively involved. It's rather hard to sit and watch while the world dances about the room around you!

The Sacred Harp Singers, the oldest of these groups, was started in early 1984. Led by Shelley Posen, a well-known folklorist and performer who picked it up in Philadelphia, Sacred Harp is a style of community singing popular in the early 1800's in Eastern States. Otherwise known as shape note singing, due to the geometric shaped notes written on bass and treble staves, it is an easily learned form of four part a cappella harmony, where the notes are sung through first, followed by the words.

Two distinct Morris Dance groups work out to the sounds of live music on alternate weeks:

The Northwest Clog Morris team performs dances derived from the industrial cities in the Northwest of England. Featuring eight-member teams dancing military type formations, the rigid patterns are amplified by the noise of wooden clogs! Well practiced, the Northwest troupe have entranced Ottawa audiences on a number of occasions.

Cotswold Morris is the perhaps more familiar "hankies and bells" variety of Morris, often seen at folk festivals. Our team is relatively new and are practicing furiously for planned "dance-outs" in the summer.

English Country Dances have also become a popular addition to the concert series. Run in conjunction with the Ottawa English Country Dance group, these are large scale events featuring the live music of the Fat Sods (an amalgamation of the Old Sods Dance Band and the Fat Boys Band from London, Ontario), dance instruction and of course DANCING!

Finally, though not a part of Old Sod per se, several members of Old Sod take turns co-hosting CKCU FM's Celtic Music program, "Music from the Glen", each Sunday noon (93.1FM on the Ottawa radio dial). A novel aspect of the program are segments recorded live at the Old Sod concerts. In depth interviews with performers are frequently conducted by Chopper McKinnon on his program, "Canadian Spaces", also a CKCU presentation, Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

IN CLOSING...

Faced with what seems to be undeniably hard work, why do we do it?

Though a better question might be: Is it worth it?...

YOU BET!

The Old Sod Folk Music Society can be reached by writing:

285 Spencer Street
Ottawa, Ontario.
K1Y 2R1



SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE SHIP INN: THE HISTORY AND OPERATIONS OF THE ST. JOHN'S FOLK MUSIC CLUB

by Susan Hart and Clara J. Murphy

The St. John's Folk Music Club, Newfoundland's only folk club, was founded in 1976. It is part of a dynamic musical scene in Newfoundland which began long before and which has changed the club itself over the years. We must therefore begin by exploring the local history of folk music revivals and earlier folk music clubs in St. John's. The history and structure of the St. John's Folk Music Club (hereafter referred to as SJFMC) can then be discussed, after which relevant aspects of its present reality will be considered. Finally, this article will contain some advice for other folk club organizers.

FOLK MUSIC REVIVALISM IN NEWFOUNDLAND

The SJFMC is a product of the folk music revivals of the 1960's and 70's. The components of the revival are printed collections of songs, commercial recordings, radio and television shows, concerts, competitions and festivals organized by folk art councils, local singer-songwriters, and newly-discovered older singers. All of these interacted to produce an ever-changing scene. The predominant influences were rock music, country and western music, indigenous music, and other revivals occurring in North America and Britain.

Basic to the revival was the technology of radios, record players, televisions, and tape recorders, as well as the money to buy these items. Omar Blondahl's recordings of Newfoundland songs in the 1950's and 60's encouraged a popular folksong revival by Newfoundlanders, which flourished with the 1966 Come Home Year celebrations. Local radio station CHOZ-FM recorded the St. John's folk festivals from 1977 on, thus making live material available for Neil Murray's Sunday morning radio program Jigs Dinner. Listeners with tape recorders extended this availability. The revivalists of the sixties allowed country and western music and rock music to influence their style. During this period, young Newfoundlanders were turning away from indigenous music and becoming consumers of American mass culture and popular music.

Like other North American cities in the late sixties, St. John's sported coffee houses where the music of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan and their like could be heard. During 1968 the Cafe Why coffee house was held in the YMCA building, and about a year later Mary McKim started hosting Cafe 22 in her basement. Between 1973 and 1975, a Memorial University Folk Music Club was held each Saturday night in the lounge of Hatcher House, a student residence. One of the residents, Chris Elliot, was the main organizer. After the official two-hour performance, the sessions would frequently continue in private rooms. (Len Penton in interview with Hart, October 23, 1983.) The Higher Level Folk Music Club was established in 1975 in the upstairs room of a downtown pub named Bridget's, but folded on management's whim.

During the seventies a wave of cultural nationalism swept Newfoundland, as people's consciousness was raised by such events as Come Home Year and the trauma produced by the resettlement program. Neil Murray set out to show that Newfoundland artists were worthy of recognition in his Profile series in The Newfoundland Herald TV Week, the most widely circulated Newfoundland magazine. Murray argued that the idea that culture must be imported to Newfoundland was like bringing coals to Newcastle. Trad rock bands meanwhile presented traditional music in palatable form for the young people following popular music. As far back as 1894, when Johnny Burke sold his Racy Little Song and Joke Book on the streets of St. John's, a small but steadily growing body of indigenous music was being published. A body of popular culture based on Newfoundland folk sources gradually flourished. The folk festivals and Murray's extremely popular radio show (1977-1982) also provided models of Newfoundland traditional singing which validated the indigenous songs and drew interest to them. Revivalists were numerous, their ranks enlarged and interest spurred by folklore graduate students from around the world, especially Canada and the U.S. Other university students, notably geologists, were also very active in the revival and the SJFMC.

A HISTORY OF THE SJFMC

The St. John's Folk Music Club was created in the summer of 1976. Charlie Pennell, an American who soon after became a member of the club, describes its formation as follows;

There was a bunch of folklore graduate students . . . and some geology grad students . . . who knew each other Some of them would get together and sing and play at each other's houses. And they got this idea to start

a folk club because Joan Kosby went off to England and saw all the wonderful folk clubs there, and she said, "Wouldn't it be nice if we had a folk club here?" You know, on the British system. So, uh, that's pretty much what started it off. (Interview with Hart, November 15, 1983.)

The club was first held upstairs at the Continental Lounge on Duckworth Street, in the heart of downtown St. John's. The room was small, lacked tables, and was remote from the bar. In addition, preference was given to dart leagues, which meant inconvenient rescheduling of weekly meetings. After a year the SJFMC moved because "the owner didn't seem to bend very much to our demands" (Pennell in interview with Hart, November 15, 1983).

The second location was the basement of the Station Hotel, a country and western bar. Pillars blocked part of the view of the performers, the stairs creaked loudly when audience members fetched beer, and the clientele upstairs showed a predilection for thumping their feet on the floor in time with loud jukebox music.

The SJFMC found its next location more satisfactory and remained there rather longer. This was the Grad House on Military Road, situated partway between the university and downtown, a residence and private bar owned and operated by the Memorial University Graduate Student Union. The Grad House has a barroom and a social room, the folk club being held in the latter on Tuesday nights. The social room held a pool table, chairs, and couches but no tables. The audience here was small and attentive, mostly comprised of graduate students. Performers liked this arrangement; Janet McNaughton, active in the club at that time, recalls:

If you wanted to drink and talk you could go to another room. There was a lot of audience control at that point. If people were talking in the room when music was going on, they were just shushed, and they would be glared at by the audience. (Interview with Hart, December 5, 1983.)

There was, however, a tendency for performers to practise in the bar, creating the distraction of a second show. When the Grad House was temporarily closed for renovations and repairs, SJFMC had to relocate to the Kingsbridge Hotel nearby. SJFMC did return to the Grad House, but finally decided to move to the Ship Inn in 1980, where the audiences are larger if less attentive. There it remains to this day.

The Ship Inn (or the Ship as it generally referred to) is a spacious but cosy English-style pub on an alley in the downtown area. It consists of one large rectangular room, the bar being diagonally opposite the door, and the stage in the corner between them. Part-way up the walls is black-painted panelling and above that is white stucco. All the woodwork (doors, pillars, shutters, beams, tables, and the bar) is painted black, as are the wrought iron window guards and the Franklin wood stove. The hundred or so chairs and bar stools are black piping with red vinyl seats and backs. Other furnishings include a sandwich bar and a few church pews. The walls are decorated with mirrors, small lamps, pictures of rural Newfoundland, and some moose antlers. The area behind the bar is replendent with bottles, mugs, bells, pictures, mirrored walls and a model ship. The floor is carpeted in a red and black pattern, as is the small, square stage. On SJFMC nights, a brightly painted sign hangs behind the stage, proclaiming the club name and a welcome to all audience and floor singers. A television hidden behind the closet partition near the door is always on; regulars often watch "the game," emerging only for more beer or to catch a new or favoured performer. On crowded nights, the top of the closet may appear lined with faces, as patrons stand on chairs to watch a good session in progress.

The Ship can hold up to one hundred and fifty people, usually averaging sixty to a hundred on folk nights. This audience is chiefly composed of people from the university community and the arts community, as well as musicians and folk music enthusiasts from other backgrounds. Also likely to be present are the Ship Inn regulars and passers-by looking for something to do on a quiet Sunday night. St. John's being a port city, foreign sailors are also sometimes in evidence.

The Ship has both advantages and disadvantages. It brings a large audience, but the audience is not always attentive. One performer who quit the club because of this commented that she would rather not sing for "a huge audience of people who are ignoring you," which she feels to be the situation there (McNaughton interviewed by Hart, December 5, 1983). There being only the one room, people have nowhere to leave the music and chat. Nevertheless, the Ship Inn has emerged as the centre for folk music in St. John's, and as such perennially attracts good performers. Other local pubs have featured the occasional folk music night in recent years, but only the SJFMC has continued to present it on a regular basis.

STRUCTURE OF THE SJFMC

As Pennell indicates above, one of the founding members of the SJFMC was Joan Kosby. Her Master's thesis in folklore, "An Ethnography of the St. Alban's Folk Music Club," concerned a British folk music club. SJFMC was inspired by and modelled on this club. The St. Alban's club had four kinds of performers: residents (members of the club), floor singers (audience members who might perform one to four songs), guests (paid proficient artists), and a band composed of residents, which would warm up the audience at the beginning of the evening. The responsibilities of the residents included creating a list of performers with a running order of songs for the session, familiarity with potential performers, taking care of the guests, creating a good audience atmosphere, encouraging floor singers, and selling raffle tickets. A club evening could extend from 8:00 pm until 11:00 pm, closing time. Audience members paid a nominal admission fee which was lowered if they possessed a membership card. At the door and inside the room, raffle tickets on a record or bottle were sold. The evening was divided into two parts by a fifteen-minute intermission (during which floor singers might perform), each of which was begun by residents and completed by the guest. The club room was separated from the barroom. (The source for this discussion is Kosby, pages 9-10, 131-144.)

This structure has been reflected in the SJFMC, with some variation. It too has charged an admission fee and sold raffle tickets from its inception. However, until recently, no admission was charged at the Ship because the proprietor was wary of turning away his regulars. The evening is of comparable length, but later, reflecting later pub hours in Newfoundland. There is no formal recognition of membership beyond residency, but the majority of those involved are musicians. Although there is no band, residents commonly perform with one another and with guests and floor singers. The order of play is also slightly different, with floor singers performing during the sets rather than at intermission. Intermission has traditionally been used for selling raffle tickets. The prize has always been a record of folk music.

In its early days, SJFMC held regular meetings to discuss problems, scheduling, and recruitment, as well as annually to elect a president. Residents took turns running the evening, on a schedule devised by the president. Interest in behind-the-scenes work has considerably lessened, however, and now the president makes most decisions on his own. By 1984, meetings were only infrequently held, and the customary September membership drive was a halfhearted word-of-mouth

campaign. One former president who felt overworked and underappreciated summed up the situation in the early 1980's as follows.

There's not the prestige with being president of the Folk Club that there was in the old days. I mean, it used to be that you were elected. . . Everybody just lost interest and it just got dumped on me because nobody else would do it. (Pennell interviewed by Hart, November 15, 1983.)

Internal conflicts and resentments, as well as dissatisfaction with club location, caused interest to dwindle over time. Another problem was that many of the early participants moved away, while others turned their energies elsewhere. There was no longer any planning or organization to speak of. Current president Glen Rowe comments that SJFMC at that time was little more than a gathering point.

THE SJFMC IN 1985

Glen's involvement with the SJFMC began as an audience member and floor singer. Interested in improving his musical skills, he became a regular performer before he formally joined. At first the club appeared to be run by a closeknit group, but after Len Penton took over in 1984 it became more open. Glen became president in April of 1985, by acclamation. In place of a membership list, he possesses a selection of phone numbers for musicians, helpful patrons, advertisers, and equipment rentals. Len still functions as a resident when he attends, and another regular, Hedley, functions as Glen's assistant. Hedley, who has a background in electronics, takes care of the sound system, collects the entrance fee and occasionally fills in with some ragtime piano music. Beyond Glen, Len, and Hedley, however, everybody else's involvement is transient and passive.

An outline of the weekly schedule for the club should give the readers a clear idea of the details of its administration. These are provided in the form of instructions the present organizer, Glen Rowe, gives himself, and which the authors elicited from him in the interview on November 20, 1985.

WEEKLY PREPARATIONS FOR AND DURING A TYPICAL SJFMC NIGHT

MONDAY -- Reserve rented equipment on the basis of who is likely to play this week. This usually includes three mike stands, amplifiers, a mixing board, microphones, a goose neck, and boom stands. Also, call CBC to take

advantage of the free advertising. Place posters in strategic locations.

SATURDAY -- Pick up rented equipment and transport it to the performance location. Acquire a float for the door. Purchase a record for the door prize. Glen asks the guest to choose the record or asks the record store proprietor for recommendations based on his knowledge of the guest's taste. Thus, the guest's music becomes a theme for the evening.

SUNDAY -- at approximately three o'clock -- Set up and test equipment. Make phone calls to set up performers for coming weeks. Around eight thirty, set somebody up at the door collecting the admission fee. (Usually Hedley performs this function early in the evening.) Plan the line-up for the evening. The guest performs in the middle and at the end, when the audience is most attentive and passers-by can be lured inside. If there are enough floor singers, the president does not play himself; he spends his time circulating through the audience, chatting especially with his helpers and potential performers. Each performer is asked to prepare five numbers, of which only three may be performed depending on how much time there is. (Glen uses hand signals to indicate whether they should do one more.) A performer who has not brought an instrument may borrow Glen's guitar or Hedley's fiddle. Each performer receives a thank-you and a beer ticket as immediate reinforcement.

CLOSING PROCEDURES -- Glen usually lets the night carry on even after last call at 11:45. He aims to close the evening by 12:15 or 12:30. At the end, he thanks everybody for coming, announces next week's guest (and an upcoming benefit if there is one), and invites people to come again. He and his helpers then store away the equipment and return the room to its everyday order for business as usual on Monday.

The SJFMC audience is becoming larger, averaging sixty to one hundred people a night since the fall of 1985, including a substantial body of regulars. During the summer months, people tend to go out of town on weekends, and musicians and audiences are attracted away at folk festivals. On the other hand, summer brings tourists and visiting performers, not to mention the die-hard regulars. SJFMC traditionally meets only once a month in summer, but Glen hopes to change this in future. (During the summer of 1985, the club met once a month at another downtown bar, Reg's, as well as at the Ship -- but this was still only half as often as the rest of the year. Furthermore, Reg's is much smaller and less known than the regular location.)

The financial arrangements have improved. When he was still president, Len convinced the bar owner to contribute fifty dollars each week as payment for the guest. The record raffle, which never paid for much beyond a drink for each performer and which annoyed audience members with pleas to buy tickets, has been discontinued. Instead, there is once again an admission charged at the door (\$1.50), with an album as door prize. For years there has been talk of a new sound system to replace the inadequate old one, but it could never be afforded. Now Glen has been able to purchase a good second-hand system with his own money, for which the SJFMC is repaying him in monthly installments, with income from admission fees and benefits. Benefits now occur regularly, ideally once a month on a Saturday night. One recent benefit featured the St. Mary's Folk Arts Council. (St. Mary's is an outport community situated in St. Mary's Bay, about one hundred miles from St. John's.) Another was held in cooperation with Memorial University Folklore Society.

SJFMC may have been established for the purpose of furthering traditional local music, but what is performed there these days is an eclectic mix. Not everybody who has ever been involved likes the idea of such variety, but by and large it is seen as healthy. There is no fixed policy as to what may or may not be performed; rather, whoever is on stage at the moment sets the tone. Punk rock and extremely obscene songs have never appeared and would not be welcomed, but the occasional electric guitar and bawdy ditty is appreciated.

Glen has been content to follow in the footsteps of the previous two presidents and run the SJFMC as a one-man show with a few dependable assistants. He considers the present location to be ideal. He has ambitious plans for the future: to acquire a truly superior sound system, and eventually to purchase a clubhouse especially for SJFMC. Whereas the SJFMC has previously been run with an exclusive emphasis on performers and music, Glen is attempting to focus on the club itself these days, in the belief that this is where audience interest is really centred.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FOLK CLUB ORGANIZERS

Up to this point our approach has been descriptive, our tone scholarly. Now we propose to take the stance of experienced advisors to others interested in forming folk music clubs. Some of the following suggestions are from the president of SJFMC, and the rest from the authors of this paper, as indicated.

When questioned on what advice he would have for potential organizers, Glen stated that the prime organizer should be a people-orientated musician capable of coordinating and productively interacting with both hobby and professional musicians. According to Glen, a hobby musician is one who performs to satisfy her or his own tastes. There is never a shortage of hobby musicians, and they are more desirable audience members than commercial musicians who refuse to touch an instrument unless they are paid to perform. Both kinds may be professional. The organizer must be able to appreciate the worth of both audience and residents, not neglecting them in favour of the guest.

The setting should be an established place, whether it is the organizer's home or the local Legion. If the setting is already identified with the music, so much the better.

Advertising is a good idea, and the St. John's example is a good one for clubs in communities of comparable size. The idea is to let as many people as possible know about the club's weekly activities, through use of the media, well-designed (and placed) posters and word of mouth. Advertising by friends who have enjoyed the club, as audience members and perhaps as performers as well, is the strongest recommendation of all. With good advertising, even the summer season may be very successful.

Ideally, residents and bar staff should be both friendly, to provide an inviting atmosphere, and firm, about audience noise-levels, so that performers can be heard. A good sound system is also a great help in this.

Glen pointed out that, so long as the cover charge is reasonably low (under two dollars) it provides no deterrent, especially if a door prize is offered.

From our own observations, we would like to add some more suggestions. A folk music club, like any other, should attempt to recruit as many dependable members as possible. A strong leader is a great asset, but the club must have an independent existence if it is to survive. Recruitment through regularly held membership drives is advisable. Membership cards, meetings and even socials outside the immediate club context would provide a sense of belonging, and hence a commitment, for interested persons. With a strong basis of an active group of members, the club is no longer a fragile entity.

CONCLUSION

The St. John's Folk Music Club serves people from a variety of backgrounds, and functions in diverse ways for them; its participants are not an homogeneous group. Many of the people who have performed traditional music at the SJFMC over the years have learned it at home and are widening rather than reviving its popularity. The SJFMC was created because of the perceived lack of an outlet for folk music performers, and the existence of an audience eager for such music. A recent trend is for revival musicians from outside St. John's to perform at the club as visitors. Folk Music Night at the Ship Inn is becoming St. John's replacement for the kitchen rackets which have become rare in the urban centres of Newfoundland. The SJFMC has survived beyond the revival of the sixties and seventies as a result of two factors. First, it combines innovation with tradition in ways which never lose their fascination. At its sessions, an elderly accordion player performing a murder ballad may be followed by a young man playing Delta Blues; a born and bred townie may sing his own compositions, after which a mainlander sings Quebecois songs, or even African lullabies. Guest performers include a barbershop quartet, a bluegrass group, a fiddler from the Port au Port peninsula. Variety is a keynote of SJFMC; the audience never knows quite what to expect. Secondly, the revival of the 1970's and 80's is part of a cycle rather than an isolated event. In 1895 singer-songwriter Johnny Burke sold his broadside ballads concerning local events of the streets of St. John's. In 1985, Jim Payne, Lem Snow, and others keep the traditional role of singer-songwriter alive while others sing songs handed down to them by their ancestors and learned from books, records and the radio. A Sunday evening at the Ship Inn involves this entire range of music, and this is why the audiences keep coming back.

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RUNNING A FOLK CLUB: ONE PERFORMER'S OPINION by Charlie Maguire

One of the things I like about the folk music business is that it's a highly individual and personal way of making a living. Each performer has a different way of finding the jobs and playing them. I like the business end of it. I like getting on the phone and making the contacts and talking directly to the people I'm going to be working for; when everything goes right it can be as rewarding as the concert itself. In order for that to happen however, there are certain courtesies that need to be extended on both sides. Here is my humble opinion on how to run a folk club.

CALL EARLY: If you are booking for a club, call the performers early enough to get the dates that you need. Speaking for myself, I like to book six months to a year in advance these days. Touring is terribly expensive, calling early gives the performers the chance to plan gigs around your club date, and so may also affect the price to you; which brings us to...

YOUR BUDGET: Tell the performers honestly what you can afford to pay. By the same token, I think the artist should tell you honestly what he or she can play the concert for. I like to be guaranteed a certain price because airlines, motels, and restaurants don't work on a "percentage of the gate"; they demand a fixed price for their services, so I must do the same. This is usually all spelled out in a written contract which we both sign; I usually send the contract back with my publicity material (photos, reviews, records, bios, etc.). Then, the club needs to deal with...

THE PUBLICITY: Publicity serves two purposes, if it's done well: it brings in your audience as well as educates the community. There have been many articles on how to do publicity using everything from word-of-mouth to T.V. spots, so I won't discuss the particulars here. Any club can fill the house with a well-known performer; it's the mark of a effective publicity machine that it can bring in an audience for lesser-known or more esoteric artists. Good publicity is learned through trial and error; find out what works for you and do it consistently. Leave no stone unturned, and get it out early. Then there is nothing left to worry about until...

ARRIVAL AND ACCOMMODATIONS: If I am coming in on public transportation I like to be met. Are you going to put the artists up after the concert is over? Provide meals? If not, then the performers should have already figured on, and asked for, more money in the initial dealings to cover the cost of hotel and meals. For me, if a club is able to put me up in someone's home, I like to have a room of my own with a door that closes (don't laugh) so that I can get some time to myself. I expect to be treated like a guest, and like a good guest, I'll expect to follow the house rules. If my hosts don't smoke, I won't smoke in front of them, or in their home or car. If they don't eat meat, I'll be happy to eat what they do have. If they have pets or children, I'll be kind and understanding of them. Personally, I don't mind helping with the dishes or making my bed, but I don't want to be called upon to split a cord of wood, or wallpaper my room before moving in. Also, if there is to be a party afterwards, I want the option of attending or going to bed. I don't want the party in my room, but a host can be creative in finding ways to give artists their privacy. I once stayed with a couple in British Columbia who had a one-room log cabin and were planning to party all night after the show. Knowing that I had to leave early the next day, they pitched a tent for me outside in the snow, and threw in enough down sleeping bags so that I was able to leave the flaps open and look at the stars before falling asleep. It was one of the best nights I've spent anywhere. But I'm getting ahead of myself, because before the party and a night's rest there is of course...

THE CONCERT: It's important to me once I hit town to find the club in the first place. Remember, you and the audience live in your town, but I don't. I hate driving around a strange town looking for the hall; give the artists a break -- they may not be able to find the "big tree with the white fence" in the dark. Send a clear map. I figure that, if you are booking folk acts, you are going to have a room set up for that kind of music. I've played places where people

brought lamps from their homes to light the stage; that's fine. On the other hand, if a club has a fully-equipped light board and sound system, I'll be glad to use it. If there is to be a front set, or house band, please move it along. It makes more sense to me if the "front act" plays first, rather than between the performer's sets. In some clubs this isn't the way things are done, I respect that, but I'm used to planning my sets and choosing songs so that the whole evening builds to some sort of conclusion. If a club puts another act on in the middle of all that, it makes me nervous because I feel like I have to "win" the audience over again. Learning to cope with different club traditions is part of the job, however, and I certainly would not be here myself if it wasn't for "front acts". I feel that a performer is correct in pressing for some say in the conduct of their show. I like an intermission, the right to sell my recordings, and no taping (either audio or video) unless it's been discussed in advance. Then it's all over except the singing and...

THE PAYMENT: Most clubs pay the artist when the evening is done. If I have never played your club before, you could go a long way toward making me feel secure if you paid me upon arrival at the club, or during intermission. Have the cash or cheque ready! It's not fair to make the performer wait around for the treasurer to show up after the concert is over. If there is some trouble with the finances, please let the artists know while it's still daylight and the banks are open. Don't wait until the last minute with money problems; maybe something can be worked out before it's time to be...

LEAVING: When the show is over and everyone has had a good time, and the performers have been paid, their job is done, but the responsibility of the club should continue. Don't turn off the lights, say goodnight, and leave the artists standing there; they may still need a ride "home" or to the airport.

I think there is an "art" to hosting people in the performing arts. It's an important part of a long tradition. And when it's done well (in this case folk clubs) it shows in the vitality of the club's members, the audience, the performers, and ultimately in the music.

Two "PARTING SONGS" for Folk Club Finishers

A while back Tim Rogers asked readers to send in songs of Canadian origin suitable for ending the evening at folk music gatherings. Only two were received -- one old, one recent -- and this issue seems an appropriate time to include them.

SAFE HOME

©1985 by John Leeder

The evening draws late, the fire burns low,
Our voices grow husky from song;
It's time to give over and go on our way,
We'll sing this one song and be gone.

CHORUS

Safe home, safe home:
Our voices grow husky from song;
Safe home, safe home:
We'll sing this one song and be gone;
We'll sing this one song and be gone.

The good songs were sung, the good tunes were played,
The good friends still know we're still strong;
The whiskey we've taken has not taken us,
And no one can say we've done wrong.

CHORUS

May our journeys flow easy, may roadblocks be few,
May homes wait in safety and peace;
May our loved ones live joyfully, free from despair,
While friendship and fortunes increase.

CHORUS

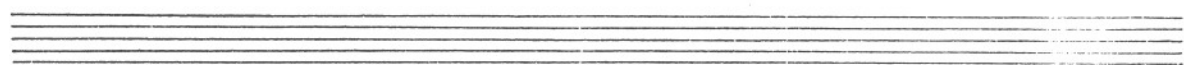
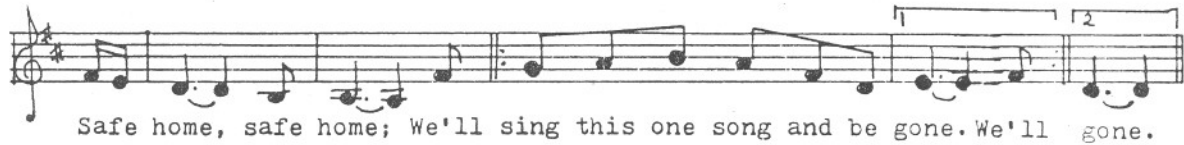
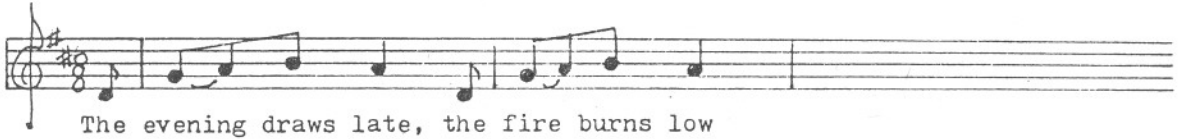
And as we roll homeward, resounding with songs,
We'll look back and be able to say;
Good times with good friends may come to an end,
But we'll carry the memories away.

CHORUS



SAFE HOME

© 1985 by John Leeder



And Say Will We Yet submitted by Ian Bell

This song does not have any beavers or mounties in it but it was collected in darkest eastern Ontario. The tune is that of the "Rising of the Moon" or "The Wearing of the Green" only sung much slower than usual. For my money this anthem to life and friendship is the best use that tune has ever been put to. It was collected by George Proctor in 1960 from Mr. Joseph Chisholm of St. Raphael's, Ontario. Chisholm was 82 at the time and Proctor's tapes are full of good songs, well sung by this man. I learned the song from a tape in the Centre for Folk Culture Studies in Ottawa and the accompanying transcription is more or less the way I've been singing it. It can stand to have the choruses repeated each time especially with a good singing audience.



And Say Will We Yet
Air: The Rising of the Moon (Wearing of the Green)
Slowly and majestically

Handwritten musical notation for the song "And Say Will We Yet". The notation is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It consists of four staves of music with lyrics written below. Chord symbols are written above the notes: D, Em7, A7, G, D, A, D, Em7 (or A7), A7, G, D, A, Bm (or D).

come sit you down my cronies, and give us your chat, let the
wine take the cares of the world on its back, let the
glass take its course, and go merrily all round, for the
moon it has to rise ere the sun it will go down and

Come sit you down my cronies and give us your chat
Let the wine take the cares of the world on its back
Let the glass take its course and go merrily all round
For the moon it has to rise ere the sun it will go down

And Say will we yet and say will we yet
If we fall we'll all get up again and say will we yet.

Here's to the miser that hoardeth his wealth
For he has not the soul to enjoy it himself
Since the brown tea of providence runs round day by day
As we journey through life let us live by the way

Let us live by the way, let us live by the way
As we journey through life let us live by the way

Now fill us a bumper of Nappins* brown ale
It will comfort the heart and enliven the tail
And we'll all be the merrier, the longer we set
For we've drunk together many a time and say will we yet.

And say will we yet and say will we yet
For we've drunk together many a time and say will we yet

And here's to the farmer, and prosper his plow
Rewarding his ardent toil the whole year through
His seed time and harvest we never will forget
For we've always been provided for and say will we yet

And say will we yet and say will we yet
For we've always been provided for and say will we yet.

*This may be "nappy" an archaic term for "strong"
beer (On the other hand it may be nothing of the kind).

A PLEA FOR WAIFS AND STRAYS

by Murray Shoolbraid



The present article is by way of a plea for the collection, publication, and study in Canada of the minor varieties of folksong-jingles, "fragments", parodies, chants, and in general the kinds not usually noticed in the past or, it seems, the present. Edith Fowke has done nicely with her two children's collections,[1] but this still leaves a lot to be looked at. In particular, the origin and development of "camp songs"-- and "college songs" too. Richard Reuss did well for a particular segment of this material in the United States [2], but what has been done in this country?

This, incidentally (I need hardly remind readers), means the inclusion of bawdy, and even obscene, material. For instance, a song sung at camp (by 9- and 10-year-olds) is "Do Your Ears Hang Low?", [3] which is an expurgation, and a somewhat nonsensical one, of a bawdy jingle which I learned in the Royal Navy thirty years ago from an 18-year-old boy from Yorkshire with a good English public school repertoire:

Do your balls hang low?
Do they dangle to and fro?
Can you tie them in a knot?
Can you tie them in a bow?
Can you swing them to the ceiling
With that free and easy feeling,
Did you ever catch your ballocks
In a rat-trap, O? [4]

Has anyone even studied the clean songs? What is the genesis (and travelling route) of "Clementine", "There is a Tavern in the Town", "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean", "I've Got Sixpence", etc.? [5] However, the "rude rhymes" of children need to be looked at, since they are not usually published, and hence remain practically uncontaminated by print -- i.e. a more or less purely oral tradition. [6] Much of this stuff is parody, of popular songs or commercial

jingles, such as that advertising Life-Savers: "...there's only one hole with the candy in the middle." The Opies' books [7] only hint at such material, but it is there in abundance, and I'm sure much has in fact been collected, although the primness of publications (even academic ones, that is, for the so-called objective scholar) has prevented much notice being given to it. Nevertheless it is a sad fact that not many studies of the "unobjectionable" songs have been made, and I feel that this should be remedied. We can't all concentrate on Child ballads or on erudite ethnomusicological analysis of Inuit throat songs. The "less important" stuff is no less viable as expression of the folk mind, and may in fact be even more revealing of the fundamental attitudes and processes of that somewhat intangible thing. [8]

As for college songs, even the genesis of the song peculiar to sororities and fraternities (and other clubs) has not been examined. This is more a U.S. phenomenon than Canadian, but such are to be found, and hence should be studied. There are also football chants: most spectator games, I think, can boast some of these -- cheerleader chants, and the choruses sung by the spectators themselves, whether at the field or off.[9] In Britain, as elsewhere, many clubs have their own song vaunting the prowess of their team; I remember the Glasgow Rangers had one, for instance;-- "We are, we are, we are merry boys", to the tune of Marching Through Georgia. Some of these have appeared on records, but again to my knowledge no particular account of them has been given,-- if I am wrong on this, please correct me.

School songs also do not seem to have been studied,-- which leads us back to camp songs. Round the fire well-known choruses are sung, often with actions, [10] and each camp may have its own song, or its own version of a ubiquitous song, the only difference perhaps lying in the substitution of the camp name.[11] Scouts are in the same position. At Scout meetings, small camps and large jamborees, songs are sung which celebrate the Scouting philosophy and/or the group in question. There is at least one (official) Scout songbook, but as with other such collections (the modern equivalent of 18th-century "Gerlands"), the provenance of items is not often made clear.

The connections of some of this material are frequently interesting because they are widespread in time and space. There is "The Darkies' Sunday School", for instance, which I remember singing with innocent gusto in Scout troop circa 1946 [12], and was certainly a favourite at universities, though not so innocent as this, perhaps:

King Solomon and King David led merrie,
merrie lives,
With lots and lots of lady friends and
many, many wives,
Till old age came upon them, they both had
many qualms,
King Solomon wrote the Proverbs, and King
David wrote the Psalms.[13]

This is a rifacimento of the idea presented in the first stanza of "Todlen Hame", an 18th-century Scottish convivial song by David McCulloch of Ardwell, Galloway:

When wise Solomon was a young man o'might,
He was canty, and liked a lass ilka night;
But cried out, "In faith Sirs! I doubt it's a sin!" [14]

Songbooks such as the one I have quoted are not necessarily to be found everywhere, being by their very nature fugitive and ephemeral productions; but should be preserved and their contents studied, and besides, there are many examples if one cares to enquire. All too often however such things are ignored when come across because of the lowly nature of their contents. One should not look down on such stuff, though, from the Olympian heights of the scholar who views anything other than a bona fide ballad (or even folksong, whatever that may mean) as something to be handled with antiseptic tongs, if at all. Child's unfortunately canonical collection deliberately omits, as is well known, many real ballads (i.e. narrative folksongs) because they do not fit his unstated purist criteria; and he refers now and again to such as "quite trashy". But trash or not, the real scholar surely finds all is grist to his mill; he is not the grammarian of folksong, laying down the rules for propriety, but its linguist, describing and analysing what actually occurs.

A few studies have been made, to be sure [15], collection, publication, and elucidation has to be done in this small corner of the field of folksong.

[1]. Edith Fowke: Sally Go Round the Sun. 300 Songs, Rhymes and Games of Canadian Children. Toronto/Montreal, McClelland & Stewart, 1969; Ring Around the Moon.

[2]. Richard A. Reuss, An Annotated Field Collection of Songs from the American College Student Oral Tradition. M.A. Thesis, Indiana University, 1965.

[3]. Fowke, Edith: Sally Go Round the Sun. 139 (#288), to a version of Turkey in the Straw. The note (p. 156) says that this, collected from Grade 3 at Bruce School, Toronto, 1962, is "usually sung in a less innocent version."

[4]. To the tune College Hornpipe. A Canadian(?) version was collected from M.J. (aged 10 1/2), 1984:

Do your balls hang low,
Do they wobble to and fro?
Can you tie them in a knot,
Can you tie them in a bow?
Do they itch you like a bitch
When you drive them though the ditch?
Do you balls--hang--low?

(Tune, Turkey in the Straw.) Cf. Ed Cray, The Erotic Muse (N.Y., 1969), p. 119; his tune is Sailor's Hornpipe, i.e. College Hornpipe. His note, p. 184, refers to other versions, including an expurgated camp song, to Turkey in the Straw.

Other juvenile camp songs, of various origins, are "Wee wee wee", "On Top of Spaghetti", "Ging Gang Gooly", "Little Rabbit Fufu", "There's a hole in the Bottom of the Sea", besides adult songs like "You are My Sunshine" and "Ezekiel Saw Two Wheels". (Information from three 11-year-olds, B.C., July 1985.)

[5]. "Clementine" dates back to 1863 (although with different music), and its authorship is disputed: see James J. Fuld, Book of World-Famous Music (1971), 174-5; but one can compare the text (and even the tune) of the Irish Ballad "The Lake of Coolfin", as e.g. in P.W. Joyce, Old Irish Music and Songs, 1909, 228, the tune of course being Bunclody. The "Tavern in the Town" first appears in America in 1883, and in Glasgow in 1891; but its history is a bit longer, since it belongs to a whole complex of songs (see e.g. Come All Ye IV.7, July 1975.144-7). Fuld dates the first printing of "My Bonnie" in 1881, as a new (though anonymous) student song; and "I've Got Sixpence" is a 1941 rewriting of a quite old song, what Kidson calls "The Jolly Shilling" (Traditional Tunes, 1891, 158), with a "rolling home" chorus. This last, by the way, has seen some sea-change since decimalisation of the British coinage.

[6]. As several have noted, e.g. Gershon Legman, The Horn Book (1964), 242.

[7]. Iona & Peter Opie, The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes (O.U.P., 1951 and several eds. since); The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren (O.U.P., 1959 etc.).

[8]. For the same reason, the humble joke, clean or otherwise, can be at least as important as the respectable wonder tale or the aetiological legend; and graffiti in toilets or on back street walls as revelatory (and relevant) as a myth.

[9]. Cf. the interesting development of the "Goodbye" song, see T.B. Rogers, "Songs at the Stanley Cup", CFMB 16: 3, 1982, p. 28.

[10]. E.G. "Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree", which I remember the late King George VI joining in on, and which has been dignified by being arranged for orchestra by Jeromir Weinberger (composer of Svanada the Bagpiper) as Variations and Fugue on Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree, 1938.

[11]. E.g. the following, to the tune of The Quartermaster's Store:

We are chums, chums, having lots of fun,
At the school, at the school,
We are chums, chums, having lots of fun
At Lynngate Public School.

from Sing-Along with Agincourt, a (Cub) Scout songbook produced by Agincourt District Clubmasters' Staff, 1963, p. 6.

[12]. With the slot-chorus:

Old folks, young folks, everybody come,
Come and join the 71st and make yourself
at home;
Wipe your feet upon the mat and sit upon
the floor,
And we'll show you lots of little things
you've never seen before.

[13]. Sing-along With Agincourt, p. 31; this stanza is not the fuller version in Student Songs (2nd ed. of Student Songs for Camp and College, London, 1958), pp. 41-43.

[14]. Transcribed by Robert Burns in a letter to Robert Cleghorn, 21 August 1795; here from the 1964 ed. of The Merry Muses of Caledonia, p. 80. I would be pleased to hear of any anterior analogues.

[15]. See Peter Narvæz, "The Folk Parodist", CFMJ V (1977), 32-7, and references; also I. Sheldon Posen, Songs and Singing Traditional at Children's Summer Camps, an M. A. thesis for Memorial, 1971.

Comptes- Rendus

Reviews

Horst Pohle, The Folk Record Source Book. England/ Ireland/ Scotland/ Wales. Berlin: privately published, 1984.

Anyone who sets out to complete a bibliography or discography must be slightly dotty. (Having toyed with the genre myself, I am in a position to know.) The resulting product too is likely to be a little dotty; and the more specialized the topic, the more this will be the case.

The discography under review is the work of a private German scholar, who exhibits both German thoroughness and (in his brief annotations) an endearing way with the English language. He lists nearly 1300 artists or groups and approximately 5000 records (including cross-references): but "Singles are not listed (I only have few information)." The recurring term "revival singer" apparently means someone whose renderings of folk songs approximate to the style of a traditional singer; and not, as one might be tempted to think, a performer of gospel hymns. Otherwise the comments are helpful in indicating the kind of music one is likely to hear: though I was mystified by the designation "Irish Revival Bouzouki" (p. 138).

To me, the most impressive thing in this book was the list of some 481 record companies cited, many of them very obscure. For the second edition (the author courageously tells us he is planning one) it would be helpful to have the addresses (or at least the country of origin) of these companies, since users may want to order records that are still in print. We are not told the sources of the author's information: but one guesses that he has a huge private collection, and knows many if not most of the records at first hand. A list of "Further Reading" (p. 256) includes a few addresses of fellow workers and of mail-order record suppliers.

The idiosyncrasies of the book start to emerge when one looks for omissions in the listing of artists. Strict alphabetization is not followed, so that for this purpose the index at the back is indispensable. A number of Canadian and Australian performers are included; and among the

former I noted the Irish Rovers; Figgy Duff; Na Cabar Feidh; The Friends of Fiddlers Green; Stan Rogers; Ryan's Fancy; Skyboat; and Stringband. However, the Canadian reader will not find such a familiar name as Gordon Lightfoot; nor Jean Carignan, Scotty Fitzgerald, Ned Landry and other country fiddlers in the British tradition. American performers are apparently omitted altogether; but I was pleased to discover that there is at least one German. In general, the book seems to list more singers and singing groups than instrumentalists: but we do not find the Alexander Brothers; Mary O'Hara; Anne and Laura Brand; Jean Redpath; Kenneth McKellar; or, for that matter, the folk song recordings of Kathleen Ferrier.

There are also serious omissions in the realm of instrumental music. A handful of Highland bagpipe players are included; but the selection is quite arbitrary. As a piper myself I have to say that only part of the repertoire can be classified as folk music -- so there are problems of definition here: but if some names are included then others deserve to be too, such as Donald MacLeod, Donald MacPherson, Robert Brown and John MacFadyen; plus Canadian pipers such as Bill Livingstone, Bob Worrall and the late John Wilson (an emigre from Edinburgh). Unfortunately, recordings of some solo pipers are available only on cassette. I found only one pipe band recording, an ancient Folkways release which happens to be one of the worst ever made. Again, it is worth mentioning that among the countless records of this genre are some fine examples by Canadian bands, from Ontario and British Columbia. Similarly, only a few records of Scottish country dance music are listed; and these do not include the Canadian bands of Stan Hamilton, Ed Brydie, Angus MacKinnon and Bobby Brown. Solo accordionists (e.g. Will Starr, Arthur Spink) are also omitted. Among solo Scottish fiddlers, the reader will not find Ron Gonnella or Pibroch MacKenzie.

In that many of those I have mentioned do not give folksy performances with modal harmonies, even when rendering folk tunes, it could be maintained that they are not folk musicians: but actually a like professionalism and Sauchiehall Street mentality characterize such authentic-sounding performers as The Chieftains (described here as an "Irish Revival Group"). It seems that in this book, apart from inadvertent omissions, covert criteria of style are being applied: and one would like to know whether the justification for this is practical (to keep the task within manageable bounds) or theoretical (implying something more than a record company definition of "folk", if not the mystical concept of the "Volk"). In either case, something could have been said about it.

Despite these reservations, and despite the limited representation of British Canadian music in the book, it should be said that it does contain a mass of useful information for collectors of British folk music records, and for lovers of reference books. I have found trivial errors in it, but that is inevitable. It is obtainable directly from the author for £6 U.K. or U.S.\$10.00 (cash), or for DM 27.00, at Goethestrasse 7A, 1000 Berlin 37.

David Waterhouse,
University of Toronto.

David Waterhouse is Professor of East Asian Studies at the University of Toronto, and a practising musician whose main instruments are piano and Highland bagpipes. He studied solo performance with the late Pipe-Major John Wilson, and has also played in several pipe bands, including (for six years) that of the 48th Highlanders of Canada. He has published widely on Asian art and music, as well as on Scottish music; and contributed several articles to the recent Encyclopedia of Music of Canada.

FOLKLORE AND LANGUAGE ARCHIVE

Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUNFLA).

Officially established by Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1968 in order to protect and preserve materials which had been accumulating for some years and to make these materials available for scholarly use.

In 1962 folklorist Dr. Herbert Halpert joined the Faculty of Memorial University. At that time there was no separate Department of Folklore; Halpert was in the Department of English which supported his activities in the collection of the cultural heritage of Newfoundland. In the mid-1960's he, with the substantial assistance of John D. A. Widdowson and several others, and with Canada Council Funding, criss-crossed Newfoundland with tape recorders, creating the library of tape-recordings which formed the backbone of MUNFLA's holdings. During the same period a series of questionnaires on various topics relating to the folklore and language of Newfoundland were distributed to students from every corner of the province by Dr. Halpert and his colleagues.

In 1968 a separate Department of Folklore was established by the University and its Directors. Neil V. Rosenberg was appointed to the new department in the position of Archivist, with the mandate to organise the tape-recordings resulting from five years of intensive collecting and those which were to follow. Violetta M. Halpert was given the task of organising the manuscript holdings.

During the following years, with funding from Canada Council and from the budget of Memorial University, projects were started which included detailed transcriptions of recordings, excerpting from manuscripts and indexing by standard motifs and tale types. In 1969 the first major work based in part of MUNFLA materials, Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland [University of Toronto Press for Memorial University of Newfoundland], was published, edited by Halpert and George M. Story. Since then several series of publications have been established under the general rubric of Folklore and Language Publications. In four series, almost twenty titles have been published by 1982. These include indexes to songs, autobiographies and collections of scholarly articles.

In 1982, besides the Director of the Archive (Neil V. Rosenberg succeeded Halpert in 1976) and the Archivist (Peter R. Narvaez), there are two full-time employees (Assistant Archivist and Secretary), three half-time stenographers who type tape transcripts and approximately a dozen part-time student assistants working in the Archive.

The functions of MUNFLA are threefold: preservation of the folk culture and oral history of Newfoundland and Labrador [and to a smaller extent that of Eastern Canada in general]; service as a research centre for scholarly projects dealing with folk culture and oral history; and service as a teaching aid in the Department of Folklore. MUNFLA is not a passive archive of the materials housed there. It actively pursues collections which it is felt should be preserved, and these materials are used within the Archive by researchers associated with the Archive, the Department of Folklore and the University, as well as by outside researchers.

In 1982 there were over 4,000 separate collections housed in MUNFLA. These contained over 6,000 original tape-recordings, 9,000 photographs, 4,000 manuscripts and about 75,000 Folklore Survey Cards, the last-mentioned being five-by-eight-inch cards, each carrying a single, brief item such as a folk belief, proverb or riddle. Other holdings include about one hundred

videotapes and small collections of films and artifacts. Each collection is given an accession number and its contents are also numbered in such a way that no object or sheet of paper is without its own unique set of numbers, making it easily cited and easily identified or found. Indexing procedures include by subject (there is a master subject index which categorises collections by one of eighteen subject headings), placenames, informants', names, songtitles and other keys.

Most of the materials in MUNFLA are the result of student collections, often from the students' home communities, done for courses offered in the Department of Folklore. These collections are very wide-ranging in scope and include such topics as community and family histories, studies of local gardening practices, repertoires of singers, musicians and storytellers and craft and work techniques, to mention only a few. Besides student contributors, depositors include University faculty [from within and outside Memorial University], broadcast media organizations and other interested groups and individuals.

Only English-language materials are housed in MUNFLA proper. French-language materials (often dealing with the francophone communities in the Port-au-Port area of Newfoundland) are housed at the Centre d'Études Franco-Terreneuviennes (CEFT) in the Department of French of Memorial University. CEFT, which works in cooperation with MUNFLA, was established in 1976 under the Directorship of Gerald Thomas.

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Jim Payne and Kelly Russell. Jim Payne and Kelly Russell Pigeon Inlet Productions PIP 7314. Available from CFMS Mail Order Service, P.O. Box 4232, Station C, Calgary, Alta., T2T 1N5 for \$10.00 (\$8.00 for members) plus \$2.00 postage.

Kelly Russell is probably best known outside of Newfoundland as one of the early members of the now-celebrated band Figgy Duff. Presently he is the driving force behind Pigeon Inlet Records and has given himself the opportunity of displaying his many talents on this album. He is joined by singer-composer Jim Payne to form a duo which has become well-known on the St. John's club circuit and whose reputation will doubtless spread as a result of this recording. Having seen them in person on a number of occasions, I was pleased to see this pair come up with a record that is highly evocative of their live performances, avoiding the over-production that seems to mar much of the current work of folksong revivalists.

The album contains a nice balance of traditional and contemporary material including pieces from Newfoundland's most gifted song and tune makers together with Jim Payne's own compositions on familiar local themes. The opening track on the record is "The Dance on Peter Street," a humorous modern-day version of the sailor outwitted. This is followed by "The Rig Worker's Alphabet," a variation on the common occupational tradition of alphabet songs which firmly establishes Jim Payne as a songmaker in the traditional mould.

Jim seems a little uncomfortable with the slower traditional song "The Emigrant from Newfoundland," and more at home with raucous, lighthearted pieces like "Sailing Along the French Shore," the humorous tale of a youth's introduction to adult courtship by west coast songmaker Lem Snow. Also from western Newfoundland are the tunes "Reel de la Pistrolle," and "Gerald Thomas' Burnt

Potato Reel," both creations of the celebrated fiddler Emile Benoit. Side 1 concludes with "The Badger Drive," J.V. Devine's composition which has become Newfoundland's best known logging song. This is my favourite among the several recorded versions, a bouncing rendition reminiscent of the finest of club performances.

The second side of the record opens with an interesting combination of the well known traditional tune "Fisherman's Favourite," and one of Jim Payne's own pieces "The Ghost of Pennywell Road," performed on string instruments. Here, Kelly Russell's virtuosity shines and Jim is allowed to display his own considerable talents as an instrumentalist. In contrast to "The Emigrant from Newfoundland," Payne handles the pathos of "The Cape Royal" with great success, employing a nicely controlled vibrato on the lingering notes.

Another lumbering song "The Twin Lakes" is followed by an interesting but to me anomalous piece entitled "Wave Over Wave." This is another Payne composition which depicts the life of a Notre Dame Bay sailor. The melody is beautiful and complemented by Kelly Russell's simple but effective concertina accompaniment. However, sandwiched between concluding choruses of the song is a monologue written and performed by actress Janis Spence which purports to portray the situation of the sailor's wife. While this piece is beautifully delivered and at times quite moving, somehow it imparts to the listener a sense of intrusion. For me, it broke not only the cohesion of one of Jim Payne's best songs, but also that of the entire album. The record concludes with "Sidney Pittman's Tune," and "Skipper Lost His Guernsey," two fiddle tunes learned from the legendary Rufus Guinchard. The eleven tracks on this record represent the best of two of Newfoundland's finest folk musicians. While the album provides a showcase for the singing talent and penmanship of Jim Payne, the musical influence of Kelly Russell is apparent throughout. While his virtuosity as a solo performer on the fiddle is widely recognized, here Russell demonstrates his many talents as an accompanist on a variety of instruments. As best shown on "Sailing Along the French Shore," his accompaniments are sometimes intricate but never allowed to become overpowering, complementing rather than competing with his partner's melody.

For those unable to see a live performance by Jim Payne and Kelly Russell this album is the next best thing.

John Ashton

Various Artists, TRADITION, Pigeon Inlet Productions, PIP 7317. Available from CFMS Mail Order Service, P.O. Box 4232, Station C, Calgary, Alberta, T2T 5N1, for \$10.00 (\$8.00 for members) plus \$2.00 postage.

This album might very well have been subtitled "A Pigeon Inlet Sampler", for it features a variety of tracks from earlier Pigeon Inlet L.P.'s together with some previously unreleased material. It's a multi-generic collection of songs, instrumental music and the spoken word aimed at providing an overview of Newfoundland traditional culture. While the jacket design and sleeve notes emphasize the province's historical and cultural ties with Europe and particularly the British Isles, almost all the material on the record is indigenous to Newfoundland and Labrador.

"Newfoundland" is a patriotic tribute to the province by one of her best songmakers, Lem Snow of Deer Lake. As can be heard on this recording and his own album The Great Lobster Boil (PIP 7316), Lem possesses a remarkably strong voice for a man in his eighties. Another octogenarian is the legendary fiddle player from Newfoundland's Greet Northern Peninsula, Rufus Guinchard. On "Out Behind the House" and "Up the Southern Shore" we hear his inimitable fiddling style with the accompaniment of Jim Payne and Kelly Russell.

Pamela Morgan is best known as lead singer with the nationally-acclaimed group Figgy Duff. On this L.P. we hear her as a soloist accompanying herself on harmonium in a rendition of "The Southern Cross" a ballad which records the loss of a Newfoundland sealing vessel in 1914.

Uncle Mose was a character popularized in the 1950's and 60's by local broadcaster Ted Russell in his CBC radio program Tales from Pigeon Inlet. In "John Cabot" the old salt recalls a spirited debate about who really did discover Newfoundland first.

If there is a more beautiful rendition of a Newfoundland folksong than Phyllis Noseworthy's "If I Had the Wings of an Eagle" I am unaware of it. The singer's gorgeous voice combines with the instrumental accompaniment of Gordon Quinton and Kelly Russell and the piano and vocal harmonies of Terry Reilly to produce a performance that is worth the price of the record on its own.

Emile Benoit from Newfoundland's Port au Port Peninsula is another of the province's best-known fiddlers. On this recording he is joined by Pamela Morgan on tin whistle in one of the more interesting of his own com-

positions, "Roaming Scott/Welcome to the Holiday Inn." Jim Payne and Kelly Russell meanwhile perform "Sailing Along the French Shore," a piece from their own album reviewed above. The Barkin' Kettle are a group of young musicians from the provincial capital of St. John's. They present "The Young Doctor" and "The Kerry Polka", two pieces imported from the British Isles.

The cante-fable is a story which contains a song as one of its central elements. It is a form of narrative which is found throughout the world and two internationally-known types in particular have been extremely popular in Newfoundland tradition. Both of them are humorous tales about the public embarrassment of unfortunate clergymen. One of them, "The Parson's Sheep," has been popular through a number of quite successful commercial recordings. The second, "Little Dickie Melbourne," is performed on this record by 81 year old Leo O'Brien from L'anse au Loup, Labrador. Rounding out the album are instrumental tracks by one version of Figgy Duff and Tickle Harbour, a St. John's based band whose style is reminiscent of the well known British group, The Boys of Lough.

All in all, this record contains some very fine Newfoundland music. My greatest disappointment was with the design and layout of the album. The cover illustration is not particularly appealing and perhaps somewhat misleading. Furthermore, I found the sleeve notes rather sparse for a record endeavouring to portray the broad parameters of a regional music tradition such as that of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Emile Benoit's solo album Ca Vient Du Tchoeur was also produced by Pigeon Inlet with the financial assistance of the Secretary Of State's office. That record was accompanied by a fine illustrated booklet containing much important contextual information as well as transcriptions of the words and tunes. In my view it would be nice if similar documentation could be provided with commercial recordings of all traditional performers. Certainly, something along those lines would have greatly added to the quality of this particular collection. Having said that, this is nevertheless a splendid record and a fine introduction for those unfamiliar with the folk music of this part of the world. The album lives up to its own claim that "This record fairly represents the richness and diversity of Newfoundland's traditional music today."

John Ashton
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Corner Brook

PORT ALFRED

There's a town called Port Alfred
DOWN IN SOUTH AFRICA
in a land formed by bigotry
AND STILL IS IT SO
there is change in the air and
the faces of the people
seem different in Port Alfred
IS IT POSSIBLE, IS IT POSSIBLE,
IS IT POSSIBLE, CAN IT BE?

For the white folk are the governors
DOWN ...
and the black folk are their children
AND STILL ...
there's a cold white indifference
to a burning black anger
as there was in Port Alfred
IS IT POSSIBLE, ...

Now it often needs rioting
DOWN ...
and it sometimes needs murdering
AND STILL ...
yet just eight days of boycott did
alter the prejudice
of the whites of Port Alfred
IS IT POSSIBLE, ...

Then in less than one hour
DOWN ...
in just a handful of minutes
AND STILL ...
they defied thier own government
and rejected apartheid
did the whites of Port Alfred
IS IT POSSIBLE, ...

There are signs called "whites only"
DOWN ...
but there's none in Port Alfred
AND STILL ...
"we're a single, non-racial,
democratic municipality"
cried the town of Port Alfred
IS IT POSSIBLE, ...

This isn't a fairy tale
DOWN ...
this is no work of fiction
AND STILL ...
that the very first gleam of light from
a dark, mad South Africa
came from tiny Port Alfred
IS IT POSSIBLE, ...

PORT ALFRED

© 1985 by Grit Laskin

The musical score is written on five staves, each with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is simple and folk-like, using mostly quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

There's a town called Port Alfred DOWN IN SOUTH AFRICA:

In a land formed by bigotry AND STILL IS IT SO:

There is change in the air and the faces of the people

Seem different in Port Alfred. Is IT POSSIBLE,

IS IT POSSIBLE, IS IT POSSIBLE, CAN IT BE?

Canadian Folk Music Society
Balance Sheet
 August 31, 1985

<u>ASSETS</u>	
Bank -- treasurer	\$ 3,620
Bank -- mail order service	2,822
Accounts receivable -- Mariposa	2,500
Inventory -- mail order service	<u>2,110</u>
	<u>\$ 11,052</u>
<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
Accounts payable	\$ 5,055
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	
General fund surplus	<u>5,997</u>
	<u>\$ 11,052</u>

Statement of Revenues and Expenses
 September 1, 1984 to August 31, 1985

REVENUES

Memberships	\$ 5,020
Sale of publications	248
Grant	2,500
Donations	30
Advertising	60
AGM registration	200
Interest	273
Foreign exchange	339
100 Songs Project	4,433
Mail Order Service	<u>2,606</u>
	15,709
Less: NSF cheque	<u>75</u>
	<u>15,634</u>

Société canadienne de musique folklorique
Bilan
 31 août 1985

<u>AVOIRS</u>	
Compte en banque -- trésorier	\$ 3,620
Compte en banque -- service de commande	2,822
Comptes à recevoir -- Mariposa	2,500
Inventory -- service de commandes	<u>2,110</u>
	<u>\$ 11,052</u>
<u>OBLIGATIONS</u>	
Comptes payables	\$ 5,055
<u>FONDS GENERAUX</u>	
Surplus de fonds généraux	<u>5,997</u>
	<u>\$ 11,052</u>

Etat de revenus et débours
 du 1er septembre 1984 jusqu'au 31 août 1985

REVENUS

Cotisations	\$ 5,020
Ventes de publications	248
Subvention	2,500
Donations	30
Publicités	60
Enregistrements à l'AGA	200
Intérêts	273
Change étranger	339
Projet des cent chansons	4,433
Service de commandes postales	<u>2,606</u>
	15,709
Moins: chèque impayé	<u>75</u>
	<u>15,634</u>

EXPENSES

Bulletin	13,929
Journal	2,536
Office supplies, photocopying	1,325
Mail, telephone	806
Promotion, advertising	147
Travel, meals, accomodation	5,922
Unused travel grant returned	999
Donations, subscriptions, memberships	357
Bank charges	48
Accounting fees	150
	<u>26,219</u>

DEFECIT

-10,585

GENERAL FUND

Opening balance	<u>16,582</u>
Ending balance	<u>\$ 5,997</u>

DÉBOURS

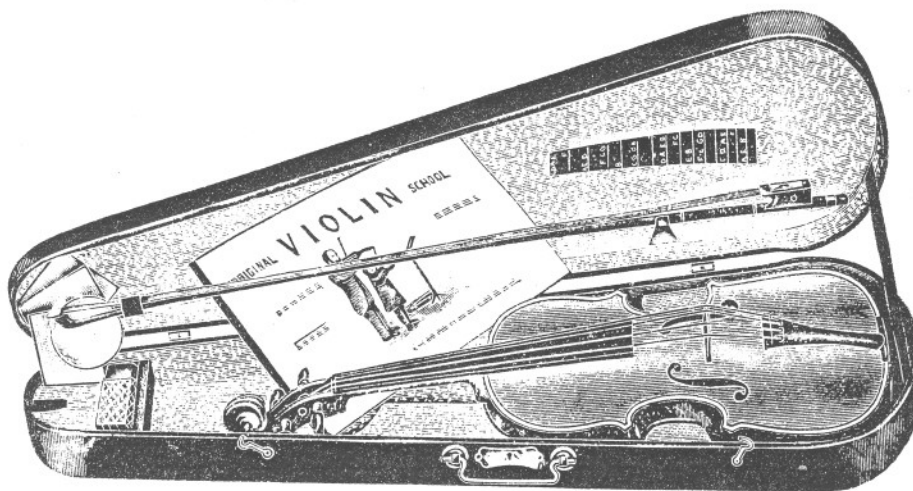
Bulletin	13,929
Journal	2,536
Fournitures de bureau, copies	1,325
Courrier, téléphone	806
Promotion, publicité	147
Voyages, repas, logement	5,922
Subvention pour voyages inutilisée et retournée	999
Donations, abonnements	357
Charges bancaires	48
Honoraires de comptable	150
	<u>26,219</u>

DÉFICIT

- 10,585

FOND GÉNÉRAL

Solde premier	<u>16,582</u>
Solde finale	<u>\$ 5,997</u>



Mail Order Service

September 1, 1984 to August 31, 1985

REVENUES

Sales -- albums and tapes	7,582
-- publications	259
Shipping and handling charges	750
Foreign exchange	278
Donations	643
	<u>9,512</u>

COST OF SALES

Stock acquisition costs	6,566
Less: ending inventory	<u>2,110</u>
	<u>4,456</u>

<u>GROSS PROFIT</u>	<u>5,056</u>
----------------------------	--------------

EXPENSES

Shipping costs	1,437
Customs and tariffs	636
Supplies	280
Services	97
	<u>2,450</u>

<u>NET MAIL ORDER SERVICE REVENUE</u>	<u>\$ 2,606</u>
--	-----------------

Service de commandes postales

du 1er septembre 1984 jusqu'au 31 août 1985

REVENUS

Ventes -- disques et rubans	\$ 7,582
-- publications	259
Frais d'expédition et de manutention	750
Change étranger	278
Donations	643
	<u>9,512</u>

COUT DES VENTES

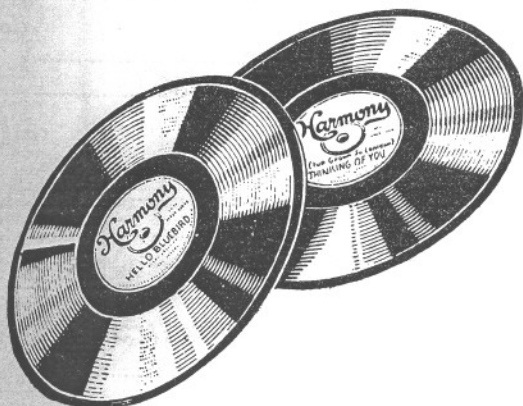
Coûts d'acquisition de stock	6,566
Moins: inventaire finale	<u>2,110</u>
	<u>4,456</u>

<u>PROFIT BRUT</u>	<u>5,056</u>
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DEPENSES

Frais d'expédition	1,437
Douane et tarifs	636
Fournitures	280
Services	97
	<u>2,450</u>

<u>REVENU NET DU SERVICE</u>	<u>\$2,606</u>
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